

# **Emergence of Modern World**

**COURSE CODE: B21HS01DE**

Undergraduate Programme in History  
Discipline Specific Elective Course  
Self Learning Material



## **SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

# **SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

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**Emergence of Modern World**

Course Code: B21HS01DE

Semester - IV

**Discipline Core Course**  
**Undergraduate Programme in History**  
**Self Learning Material**  
**(With Model Question Paper Sets)**



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# EMERGENCE OF MODERN WORLD

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Semester- IV

Discipline Specific Elective Course  
Undergraduate Programme in History

## Academic Committee

Dr. K.S. Madhavan  
Dr. U.V. Shakkeela  
Aneesh S.  
Dr. Manoj T. R.  
Dr. Vysakh. A. S.  
Dr. K. Savitha  
Dr. Soumya S.  
Jisha D. Nair  
Dr. V. Jyothirmani

## Development of the Content

Dr. Reeja R.  
Benaseer V.I.  
Amal Krishna M.  
Reshma R.

## Review and Edit

Dr. Alex Mathew

## Linguistics

P.J. Jose

## Scrutiny

Dr. Preethi Chandran P.B.  
Thahani Rezak,  
Dr. Reeja R.  
Zubin Antony Mehar Renold  
Dr. Arun A.S.

## Design Control

Azeem Babu T.A.

## Cover Design

Jobin J.

## Co-ordination

Director, MDDC :  
Dr. I.G. Shibi  
Asst. Director, MDDC :  
Dr. Sajeevkumar G.  
Coordinator, Development:  
Dr. Anfal M.  
Coordinator, Distribution:  
Dr. Sanitha K.K.



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**Edition**  
January 2025

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ISBN 978-81-982754-7-9



9 788198 275479

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# MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR

Dear learner,

I extend my heartfelt greetings and profound enthusiasm as I warmly welcome you to Sreenarayanaguru Open University. Established in September 2020 as a state-led endeavour to promote higher education through open and distance learning modes, our institution was shaped by the guiding principle that access and quality are the cornerstones of equity. We have firmly resolved to uphold the highest standards of education, setting the benchmark and charting the course.

The courses offered by the Sreenarayanaguru Open University aim to strike a quality balance, ensuring students are equipped for both personal growth and professional excellence. The University embraces the widely acclaimed “blended format,” a practical framework that harmoniously integrates Self-Learning Materials, Classroom Counseling, and Virtual modes, fostering a dynamic and enriching experience for both learners and instructors.

The University aims to offer you an engaging and thought-provoking educational journey. The Undergraduate Programme in History is carefully designed to incorporate recent trends in historical knowledge. Concepts, methodologies, and interpretations are presented as a coherent narrative tailored to fit the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) format. This programme aims to inspire students to pursue further reading in the discipline. Its primary objective is to cultivate competent history learners who are well-versed in the principles of historical understanding.

Rest assured, the university’s student support services will be at your disposal throughout your academic journey, readily available to address any concerns or grievances you may encounter. We encourage you to reach out to us freely regarding any matter about your academic programme. It is our sincere wish that you achieve the utmost success.



Warm regards.  
Dr. Jagathy Raj V.P.

01-01-2025

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**BLOCK**

# Rise of Modern Europe

SOUL



# Scientific Revolution

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ comprehend the concept of scientific revolution
- ◆ explain how scientific revolution helped geographical exploration
- ◆ examine the role of "scientific societies in scientific revolution"
- ◆ discuss how scientific revolution and geographical explorations led Europe to Modern Age

### Prerequisites

By the end of the Renaissance, traditional institutions and practices faced intense criticism. Simultaneously, a new perspective on nature emerged in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Early in the seventeenth century, scientific societies began forming in Italy, soon spreading across Europe, promoting and popularising new ways of thinking. These societies emphasised systematic experimentation as the most reliable research method. Advances in mathematics, physics, astronomy, biology (including human anatomy), and chemistry reshaped societal perceptions of nature. The contributions of scholars such as Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton played a pivotal role in the Scientific Revolution, significantly influencing technological advancements in geography and facilitating new discoveries. This transformation continued into the late eighteenth century, shaping intellectual and social movements and ultimately replacing the Hellenic worldview that had dominated science for nearly two millennia. Science emerged as an independent discipline, distinct from philosophy and technology. By the end of this period, it can be argued that science had supplanted Christianity as the defining force of European civilisation.

This unit explores the transformative impact of the Scientific Revolution and the Age of Exploration. It highlights how Renaissance scientists like Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton established knowledge based on observation and experimentation, leading to groundbreaking advancements in physics, astronomy, medicine, and scientific methodology. The unit examines the rejection of Aristotelian views and Church authority, the rise of empiricism and rationalism, and the role of scientific societies in fostering intellectual progress. Additionally, it delves into the Age of Exploration, driven by economic ambitions and the zeal for geographical discoveries, which led to the opening of new trade routes, the rise of colonialism, and a shift in global commerce. These developments laid the foundation for the Enlightenment, modern science, and economic transformations that reshaped societies worldwide.

## Keywords

Heliocentric Theory, Copernican Theory, Scientific Method, Laws of Pendulum, Baconian Method, Cartesian, Galileo, Empiricism, British Royal Society, The Paris Academy

## Discussion

The Renaissance scientists like Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Isaac Newton etc asserted through their work that knowledge, distinct from belief, was based on experiments and observation. Once these scientists had shown the way, experiments and investigations into what came to be called physics, chemistry and biology expanded rapidly. Historians call this new approach to the knowledge of man and nature a scientific revolution. Consequently, in the minds of skeptics and non-believers, God began to be replaced by nature as the source of Creation. Even those who retained their faith in God started talking about the distant God, who does not directly regulate the act of living in the material world. Such ideas were popularised through scientific societies that generated a new scientific culture in the public domain. The Royal Society formed in 1660 in London for promotion of natural knowledge and the Paris Academy established in 1666

held lectures and conducted experiments for reviewing. Those societies became the meeting place of philosophers to examine, discuss, and criticise new discoveries and old theories. The foundation of these societies marks the zenith of the Scientific Revolution.

### 1.1.1 Scientific Revolution

Philosopher and historian Alexandre Koyre coined the term Scientific Revolution in 1939 to describe these new developments in science in early modern Europe.

The scientific revolution was marked by the following changes:

- ◆ Science and scientific-methods gained significance during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- ◆ The question “how” gained importance rather than the question



“why” that characterised the Aristotelian search for reason.

- ◆ Heliocentric theory replaced the geo-centric theory.
- ◆ Aristotelian theory and the authority of the Church were rejected.
- ◆ Rather than viewed as an organism, nature was seen as a machine.
- ◆ With the efforts of Francis Bacon and Rene Descartes, a method of enquiry based on observation and experiment was developed.

Founded on ancient Greek learning and science in the Middle Ages, Scientific revolution had been elaborated and further developed by Roman/Byzantine science and medieval Islamic science. The Aristotelian tradition was still an important intellectual framework in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, although by that time natural philosophers had moved away from much of it. Key scientific ideas dating back to classical antiquity had changed drastically over the years, and in many cases been discredited. The ideas that remained (for example, Aristotle’s cosmology, which placed the Earth at the center of a spherical hierarchic cosmos, or the Ptolemaic model of planetary motion) were transformed fundamentally during the scientific revolution.

The great scientists like Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Vesalius and Newton are the important figures of the Scientific Revolution. Most scholars believe that the scientific revolution started with the publication of two works in 1543 that changed the course of science: Nicolus Copernicus’s *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres* and Vesalius’s *On the Fabric of the Human Body*. Copernicus in his book put forward the heliocentric theory in which he tried to demonstrate that the Sun was the centre of the universe, not the Earth. This radical

displacement of the Earth to an orbit around the Sun (as opposed to being seen as the center of the universe) was not acceptable to the scientific community of the time or the Church. Fearing the hostility of the Church, Copernicus postponed the publication of his theory. It was published only in the year he died. About half a century after the publication of his book, Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake on the charge of heresy for advocating ideas, which were based on the theory of Copernicus. The heliocentric theory was later developed by Kepler and popularised by Galileo.

**Johannes Kepler** (1571-1630), a German scientist, with the help of mathematics, explained how planets move around the Sun. He set down the principles, which govern the movements of the planets and described their paths. However, he did not agree with the assumption of Copernicus that the planet revolved around the Sun in circular paths. Instead, he suggested that the orbit of the planets were elliptical.

**Galileo Galilei** (1564–1642), an Italian astronomer and physicist, significantly advanced the Copernican theory and classical astronomy by using a telescope in 1609, inspired by a Dutch lens maker. With it, he discovered mountains on the Moon, sunspots, and Jupiter’s moons. Galileo rejected Aristotle’s theory of falling bodies and discovered the laws of the pendulum by observing a swinging lamp in Pisa. He pioneered experimental methods in science, linked mathematics with physics, and formulated principles of mechanics, including insights that led to Newton’s first two laws of motion. Galileo’s works, *Letters on Sunspots* and *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, challenged Ptolemaic astronomy and supported the Copernican model, laying the groundwork for modern science. Convicted of heresy by the Inquisition in 1633, he was forced

to recant his views.

The evolution of scientific methodology emphasised the role of empiricism, valuing experimental and observed evidence. This shift reflected changing perceptions of scientists' roles in understanding nature. The term 'British empiricism' emerged to highlight philosophical differences, distinguishing Francis Bacon, an empiricist, from René Descartes, a rationalist.

**Francis Bacon** (1561–1626), an English scientist, advocated the inductive method of scientific inquiry in his book *Novum Organum*, laying the foundation for what became known as the Baconian method or the scientific method. This approach emphasised a systematic investigation of nature and significantly influenced modern scientific methodology. Similarly, René Descartes (1596–1650), a French mathematician, distinguished between knowledge derived through reason (rationalist approach) and that requiring experiential evidence, as in physics. His *Discourse on the Method* (1637) established the Cartesian method, further shaping scientific inquiry. Another mathematician, Isaac Newton from England discovered the *Law of Gravitation*. With the help of mathematics he proved that all the heavenly bodies move according to the law of gravitation.

The scientific revolution was also characterised by changes in other branches of knowledge. Significant discoveries were made in the study of the human body and circulation of blood. In 1543, **Vesalius**, a Belgian physician published his outstanding book *On the Fabric of the Human Body*, which provided the first complete description of the human body. William Harvey, an English physician, discovered the process of the circulation of blood from the heart to all parts of the body and back to the heart and in 1628 published a book in Latin about

his discoveries called *De Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus*. These discoveries corrected past misconceptions, initiated a new approach to health and disease, and led medical practitioners to study human anatomy through human dissection instead of relying on animal dissections.

Thomas Hobbes, George Berkeley, and David Hume were the primary exponents of empiricism, and they developed a sophisticated empirical tradition as the basis of human knowledge. One of the pioneers of the approach was John Locke, who proposed in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) that the only true knowledge that could be accessible to the human mind was that which was based on experience.

Many new ideas contributed to the scientific revolution. The invention of tools also deepened the understanding of sciences. The mechanical calculator, steam digester (the forerunner of the steam engine), refracting and reflecting telescopes, vacuum pump, mercury barometer, were invented. Scientists discovered and started studying magnetism and electricity, and thus, electric properties of various materials were invented. Disciplines (making them more as what they are today) such as dentistry, physiology, chemistry, or optics were also developed and modernised during this time.

The Scientific Revolution paved the way for the Age of Enlightenment, which prioritised reason as the main source of authority and legitimacy. The Enlightenment emphasised the importance of the scientific method and linked scientific progress with challenging religious and traditional authority to promote free speech and thought. Enlightenment thinkers, many with scientific backgrounds, valued empiricism, rationality, and the ideals of progress and advancement in their discourse. At the same time,

scientific societies and academies replaced universities as key centers for research and the development of science. They played a crucial role in establishing the scientific profession. Additionally, the popularisation of science gained momentum, driven by a growing literate population.

The 17th century, often called the “century of science,” witnessed groundbreaking advancements across various fields, including medicine, mathematics, physics, biological taxonomy, magnetism, electricity, and the establishment of modern chemistry, fundamentally transforming earlier notions and practices. The change of the medieval idea of science occurred for four reasons:

- ◆ Seventeenth century scientists and philosophers were able to collaborate with members of the mathematical and astronomical communities to effect advances in all fields.
- ◆ Scientists recognised that medieval experimental methods were insufficient for their work, so they developed new techniques, some of which are still in use today.
- ◆ Academics could draw on the scientific philosophy of Europe, Greece, and the Middle East as a foundation, either by challenging or expanding on the existing theories.
- ◆ Institutions like the British Royal Society supported science by providing a platform for scientists to publish their work.

The scientific revolution marked a shift away from relying on natural and artificial circumstances, replacing them with a research tradition grounded in systematic experimentation. This new approach, based on inductive reasoning, contrasted sharply

with the Aristotelian method of deduction, where known facts were analysed to generate further insights. While many believed a balance between questioning assumptions and interpreting observations was crucial, the abandonment of the Aristotelian system paved the way for modern science. New theories and methods provided a more accurate foundation for scientific understanding, profoundly influencing Western political, economic, social, artistic, and intellectual life. As scientific authority grew, it began to challenge religious authority, contributing to the Enlightenment. This period fostered the values of individualism, rationalism, and the belief in human capacity to discern truth through reasoning. Additionally, the scientific revolution played a significant role in the rise of capitalism.

### 1.1.2 Voyages and Geographical Explorations

The sudden increase of explorations and voyages in Europe in the fifteenth century is regarded as one of the major turning points of history. Many European nations started looking for new trade routes, especially for spices and silk. When the Ottoman Empire took over Constantinople in 1453, Europe suffered a setback as it blocked important trade routes like India, North Africa and the Red Sea for Europe, thus limiting their trade. Known as the age of exploration or the age of discoveries, this period is said to have begun in the early fifteenth century and continued until the latter part of the seventeenth century. The most important characteristic of this age is that unlike Chinese explorations these voyages were planned and supported by the local governments or by big merchant companies in the search of new sea-routes; thus were directed to the open oceans.

There were two motives behind these explorations. The first being the zeal to spread Christianity as a faith throughout the

world and second, to restock the supplies of precious stones and metals as well as spices in Europe. In addition, some explorers went into the open waters to simply know the unknown. Whatever the reason or motive be, this age of exploration or discovery had a long-lasting influence on the geographical knowledge. This is because the knowledge gained through these experiences helped in the advancement of geographical thinking over time. Moreover, this age can be seen as a bridge between the Medieval and the Modern periods along with its contemporary Renaissance movement.

The most important motive for the geographical discoveries was economic, the desire to acquire wealth from the East through trade and other means. At this time the demand for oriental goods was steadily increasing in Western Europe. But the Arab-Italian merchants monopoly made these goods extremely expensive. Hence the emerging national monarchs of Western Europe were over to find out a new sea-route to the East. They financed exploratory voyages for acquiring profitable Eastern trade and wealth from new lands.

The capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 intensified the desire to find a new sea route to the East. With the fall of Constantinople, the land-route to the East through the city was closed. As there was no other land-route available, the Europeans were now forced to find an alternative trade-route to the East. The factors like the spirit of curiosity and enquiry generated by Renaissance, the desire to spread Christianity, the ruler's strategic need of occupying distant lands etc. also acted as the motives for the geographical discoveries.

### 1.1.2.1 Major Discoveries

During the early fifteenth century till the eighteenth century European ships travelled

around the world to search for new lands for trade. The Portuguese, Spanish, Italians and others have been sailing through the Mediterranean Sea for a long time but the first of the journey towards wider exploration came from Portugal. In the fifteenth century, Portugal was much noted for navigational enterprises. As Portuguese were exploring Africa, the Spanish also started dreaming of finding trade routes to the Far East.

Prince Henry, the fourth son of King John of Portugal, played a crucial role in advancing maritime exploration in the early 15th century. In 1419, he established a school to train seamen and began funding expeditions that pushed beyond known routes and ports. Known as 'Henry the Navigator,' he devoted his wealth and resources to promoting exploration. His early voyages took Portuguese sailors to the Canary Islands, the Madeira Islands (1419), and the Azores (1432). Henry also founded the first Institute of Geographic Research at Sagres in 1418, a center that contributed significantly to the expansion of maritime knowledge. In 1434, under the leadership of Gil Eannes, Portuguese sailors crossed the Equator, disproving myths about the tropical regions, such as boiling water and people turning black. The Portuguese continued their explorations along the coast of Africa, reaching Mauritania in 1441. Between 1444 and 1448, numerous voyages extended their reach, leading to the discovery of the Guinea coast and the Cape Verde Islands. By the time of Henry's death in 1460, Portuguese explorers had reached as far as Sierra Leone in West Africa. His successor, King John II, furthered the quest for a sea route to India, encouraging further southern exploration along the African coast.

In 1488, Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias made a significant achievement by sailing around the southern tip of Africa. He named the landmark "The Cape of Storms"

due to the fierce storms he encountered there. However, King John II preferred to call it "The Cape of Good Hope," as it symbolised the possibility of finding a sea route to India. A few years later, Vasco da Gama followed Dias's path, sailing around the Cape of Good Hope, crossing the Indian Ocean, and reaching Calicut, India, in 1498. This voyage was crucial in opening a new maritime route from Europe to India. In 1500, Pedro Alvares Cabral, while navigating along the western coast of Africa toward India, was caught in a storm and ended up on the eastern coast of South America. He landed in Porto Seguro, Brazil, which was named after the Brazilwood tree, known for its deep red dye. This tree was the first commercially exploited product from Brazil.

In the late 15th century, while Portugal focused on finding a sea route to the East, Spain encouraged westward exploration across the Atlantic. On August 3, 1492, Spain sponsored Italian navigator Christopher Columbus to undertake this journey. Columbus set sail with three ships - the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria - carrying a crew of 90 men. After a challenging voyage, he reached the Island of San Salvador (modern-day Bahamas) in October 1492, mistakenly believing he had arrived in the Indian Islands. Columbus was unaware that he had arrived on a large continent that was unknown to Europeans. His voyages, however, opened the Americas to Spanish exploration. This discovery sparked a conflict between Spain and Portugal over territorial claims. To resolve the dispute, the Treaty of Tordesillas was signed in 1494, dividing the newly discovered lands outside Europe between the Spanish and Portuguese empires. The dividing line of the treaty was established either 270 leagues west of the Azores or 370 leagues west of Cape Verde.

According to this, Portugal had exclusive rights on the lands right of the Line while Spain had rights on the land left to it.

Portugal, therefore, gained access to the entire Indian Ocean, while Spanish had open access to the entire New World west of the Atlantic. Though Christopher Columbus is credited with the discovery of America, it was comprehended only later in 1501 by Amerigo Vespucci, an Italian voyager, who served Spain first and then Portugal in their maritime enterprises. The newly discovered land was thus named to America after Vespucci. The discovery of America was an epoch making event in world history.

Spain continued its effort to find a westward route to Asiatic lands. In 1513, a Spanish navigator Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama and found the Pacific Ocean. However, a complete westward sea route was not found until 1519, when Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan, working for Spain, set out from Seville. His westward journey sponsored by Spain started in 1519 from Seville (an inland river port in South West Spain). Crossing the Atlantic, Magellan sailed down the coast of South America and crossed what is now the Strait of Magellan. The new sea, which he then entered, was found peaceful. Thus he named it 'The Pacific.'

In 1521, Magellan's team reached the Philippines, after a three month long Pacific journey. Unfortunately, Magellan was killed there in a battle with a local chief. His surviving companions kept going along the known route through the Indian Ocean and the coast of Africa. They finally reached Spain in 1522. Magellan and his men thus happened to be the first circumnavigators of the globe. For the first time Magellan's circumnavigation of the world ultimately proved that the world was round.

Other countries entered the exploration race at a later stage, with their primary goal being the discovery of a westward sea route to the East. In 1497, John Cabot, an Italian

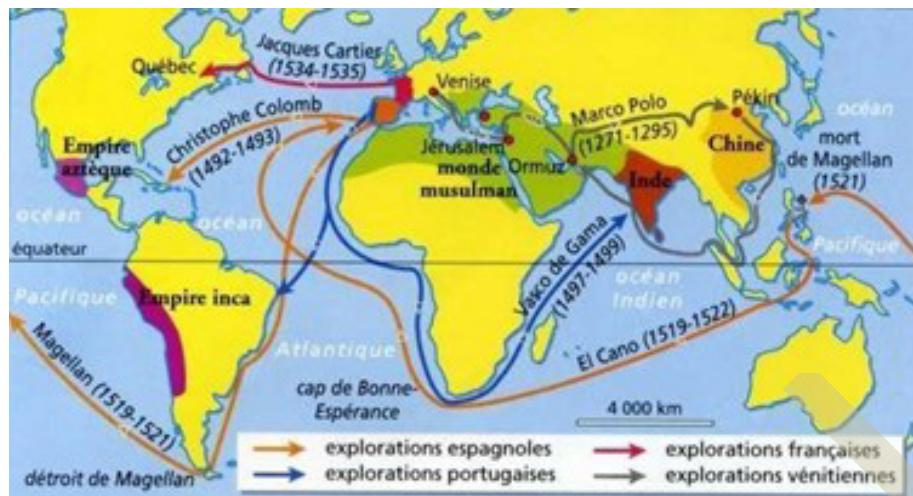


Fig 1.1.1 The Age of Exploration

navigator, under the service of England, discovered Newfoundland in North America. Towards the close of the sixteenth century English navigators Francis Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh and Gilbert explored the eastern coast of North America. Francis Drake was the first Englishman to sail around the world (1577). Jacques Cartier, a French sailor, discovered River St. Lawrence in North America. With the help of the Dutch East India Company Henry Hudson discovered the River Hudson. The discovery of Australia by the Dutch in the seventeenth century was another significant event in the history of European explorations.

The geographical discoveries brought about radical economic changes. It led to a tremendous increase in the volume of trade. Regular trade contacts among continents were established and trade became global. The growth in the volume of trade and associated changes brought about what is called the commercial revolution. With this, the axis of trade was shifted from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. Italian control over European trade ended. The new commerce dealt a heavy blow to the guild system of medieval Europe. The most important consequence of geographical discoveries was the beginning of colonialism.

#### Geographical Explorers and the 'New Lands' discovered by them in the Age of Discovery

S.No	Name	Time	Nationality	Area explored
1	Prince Henry the Navigator	1394-1460	Portugal	Madeira Islands and the Azores
2	Bartolomeu Dias	1450-1500	Portugal	Cape of Good Hope
3	John Cabot	1450-1499	Italy	Newfoundland
4	Christopher Columbus	1451-1506	Italy	America
5	Amerigo Vespucci	1454-1512	Italy	America
6	Juan Ponce de Leon	1460-1521	Spain	Florida, USA

7	Pedro Alvares Cabral	1467-1520	Portugal	Brazil
8	Vasco da Gama	1469-1524	Portugal	India
9	Ferdinand Magellan	1480-1521	Portugal	Circumference of Earth
10	William Barents	1550-1597	Dutch	North Shores of Europe
11	William Jansz	1570-1630	Dutch	Coast of Australia
12	Abel Tasman	1603-1659	Dutch	Tasmania and New Zealand
13	Captain James Cook	1728-1779	Britain	Pacific Ocean

## Recap

- ◆ Renaissance scientists emphasised experiments and observation over belief
- ◆ Scientific revolution shifted knowledge from faith to systematic inquiry
- ◆ Heliocentric theory replaced geocentric views, challenging Church authority
- ◆ Nature was viewed as a machine, not an organism
- ◆ Scientific societies fostered research, debate, and experimental methods
- ◆ Copernicus introduced heliocentric theory; Kepler refined the theory of planetary motion
- ◆ Galileo advanced astronomy with telescopes and supported Copernican theory
- ◆ Francis Bacon promoted empiricism; Descartes developed rationalist methods
- ◆ Newton formulated the Law of Gravitation
- ◆ Vesalius and Harvey revolutionised studies in human anatomy and blood circulation
- ◆ New tools like telescopes and barometers advanced scientific exploration
- ◆ Geographical explorations sought trade routes and wealth from the East
- ◆ Fall of Constantinople spurred the search for alternative trade routes

- ◆ Portuguese explorers pioneered African coastal exploration and maritime routes
- ◆ Columbus' voyages led to the European discovery of the Americas
- ◆ Treaty of Tordesillas divided the New World between Spain and Portugal
- ◆ Magellan's circumnavigation proved the Earth's roundness
- ◆ Geographical discoveries triggered global trade and the Commercial Revolution
- ◆ Exploration laid the foundation for European colonialism

## Objective Questions

1. Who coined the term scientific revolution?
2. Name two scientific societies that fostered scientific revolution in Europe.
3. Who introduced heliocentric theory?
4. Who popularised heliocentric theory?
5. Name the Italian scientist and astronomer who used a telescope for Astronomical exploration first.
6. Name the first scholar who developed experimental methods in science.
7. In which book Francis Bacon advocated the inductive method of science?
8. What is the scientific method developed by Descartes known as?
9. Name the Belgian physician who wrote *On the Fabric of the Human Body* which provided the first complete description of the human body.
10. Who discovered the process of the circulation of blood?
11. Which century is known as the 'century of science'?
12. Who invented the printing press?

## Answers

1. Alexander Koyre
2. The Paris academy (Paris, 1670), The Royal Society (London, 1662)
3. Copernicus
4. Galileo
5. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642)
6. Galileo
7. *Novum Organum*
8. Cartesian
9. Vesalius (1514-1564)
10. William Harvey (1578-1657)
11. Seventeenth century
12. Johannes Gutenberg

## Assignments

1. Analyse the role of technological advancements (e.g., telescopes, vacuum pumps) during the Scientific Revolution.
2. What were the main motives behind the geographical explorations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?
3. Evaluate the contributions of Prince Henry the Navigator to maritime exploration.
4. Explain the role of Francis Bacon and René Descartes in shaping scientific methodology.
5. What were the major geographical discoveries made by explorers from England, France, and the Netherlands?

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## Suggested Reading

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# Renaissance

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the fundamental elements of the European Renaissance
- ◆ discuss the favourable conditions that facilitated the Italian city-states to welcome the Renaissance
- ◆ explore the works of artists such as Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci
- ◆ understand the Humanist movement, which emphasised classical learning, education and human potential

### Prerequisites

The Renaissance, meaning “rebirth” in French, emerged as a cultural and intellectual movement that sought to revive the classical art, literature, and philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome. It originated in Italy between the 14th and 16th centuries and later spread across Europe, marking a transition from the medieval to the modern world. The Renaissance was driven by several key factors, including the decline of feudalism, the rise of trade and commerce, the influence of classical knowledge preserved by Arab scholars, and the growing emphasis on humanism - a belief in the artistic and intellectual advancements. The invention of the printing press further accelerated the dissemination of Renaissance ideas across Europe. In this unit, we have explored the major characteristics and impact of the Renaissance. We examined how the movement fostered a new worldview based on reason, secularism, and individualism. It also deals with the contributions of key figures such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael in art, as well as writers like Petrarch, Erasmus, and Machiavelli, who reshaped literature and political thought and figures like Copernicus, Galileo, and Vesalius who challenged medieval perceptions and laid the foundation for modern scientific inquiry.

# Keywords

Classical Civilisation, Renaissance, Humanism, Dark Age, Florentine School, Venetian School

## Discussion

### 1.2.1 Renaissance

The Renaissance, meaning “rebirth” in French, signifies the revival of classical Graeco-Roman civilisation, art, and learning. Emerging in Italy between 1300 and 1500 CE, it later spread to northern Europe, bringing new developments in art, literature, religion, philosophy, science, and politics. This period marked a shift towards a humanistic perspective, a rational and secular outlook, individualism, and a reinterpretation of Christianity. Unlike the feudal societies of Western Europe, Italy’s fragmented political structure, thriving trade networks, and wealthy merchant class fostered an environment conducive to intellectual and artistic growth. Cities like Florence and Venice, free from clerical dominance, became cultural hubs where scholars and artists thrived under the patronage of rulers and merchants. Additionally, Italy’s rich classical heritage and absence of rigid scholastic traditions encouraged critical thinking and creative expression. The Renaissance laid the foundation for modern thought, emphasising reason, creativity, and a new vision of state power independent of the Church.

From Italy, the Renaissance ideas spread to other European countries as well; Germany, France, England, Poland and Scandinavian countries like Norway, Sweden and Denmark. However, it could not go beyond the borders of Europe. Therefore, historians call Renaissance a European phenomenon. But, though it could not cross the Ural river,

the influence of Asian culture on Renaissance could not be ignored.

#### 1.2.1.1 Influence of the Asian World

In the fourteenth century, many scholars began to read translated works of Greek writers like Plato and Aristotle. For this they indebted not to their own scholars but to Arab translators who had carefully preserved and translated ancient manuscripts (Plato was Aflatun and Aristotle was Aristo in Arabic). Europe and Asia have had cultural contact from time immemorial. The trade and Crusade facilitated the cultural exchange between the continents. It was Arabic translators who carefully translated and preserved many classical Greek and Latin works especially those of Ptolemy, Plato, Aristotle, Archimedes and Euclid during the Middle Age. European scholars depended on these translations during the Renaissance period.

While some European scholars read Greek in Arabic translation, the Greeks translated works of Arabic and Persian scholars for further transmission to other Europeans. These were works on natural science, mathematics, astronomy, medicine and chemistry. Ptolemy’s *Almagest*, an astronomical work originally written in Greek before 140 CE and later translated into Arabic - includes the Arabic definite article ‘al’, highlighting its connection to the



Arabic tradition. Among the Arabic writers who were regarded as men of wisdom in the Italian world were Ibn Sina (Avicenna in Latin, 980-1037 CE), an Arab philosopher and physician from Bukhara in central Asia) and al-Razi (Razes'), author of a medical encyclopedia. Ibn Rushd ('Averroes' in Latin, 1128-1198), an Arab philosopher of Spain, tried to resolve the tension between philosophical knowledge and religious beliefs. His method was adopted by Christian thinkers.

In the field of science, the Europeans learned the ideas of navigational tools like a mariner's compass, astrolabe and maps from China. The most important discovery that made the Renaissance possible was the printing press. Renaissance Europe was indebted to China for this as well. The woodblock printing in China became the basis of the European printing press. It facilitated the printing and circulation of numerous copies of classical Graeco-Roman literature. The Eastern numerical system or the Indo-Arabic numeral system served as the basis of their enquiries in mathematics.

Asian civilisation and their culture had a tremendous influence on the European renaissance. Therefore it is unfair to say that Renaissance was shaped only by the classical civilisation of Rome and Greece. The very fundamental ideas of the European Renaissance were in fact derived from the East. The Europeans learned a lot from India, Arabia, Iran, Central Asia and China. These contributions were not acknowledged for a long time due to traditional historians' Euro-centric approach in writing history.

## 1.2.2 Humanism

The earliest European universities, such as Padua and Bologna, initially focused on legal studies, essential for trade agreements, but later incorporated the study of ancient Roman culture. The Renaissance ushered

in Humanism, marking a shift from a God-centered to a human-centered worldview. Originating in Italy, Humanism emphasised the study of humanities - language, literature, history, philosophy, and ethics - introducing new subjects and artistic approaches that moved beyond religious teachings. Florence emerged as a cultural hub, fostering creativity and intellectual growth, with figures like Dante and Giotto leading the transformation. Humanists valued individual freedom, self-reliance, and civic virtue, challenging societal and religious abuses while advocating for personal dignity and secular knowledge.

Renaissance Humanism dismantled medieval constraints, weakening the Church's authority and contributing to the rise of the modern secular state. It encouraged education, scientific inquiry, and a spirit of exploration, influencing artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, as well as architects and scholars. Supported by elite patrons, such as the Medici family, this movement reshaped European culture, blending classical wisdom with contemporary advancements in science, observation, and the arts. While universities retained traditional curricula, humanist studies gradually spread across Europe, laying the foundation for modern education and intellectual thought.

### 1.2.2.1 The Humanist View of History

Humanists believed they were restoring "true civilisation" after what they saw as a period of darkness following the fall of the Roman Empire. They viewed the era after the Empire's collapse as a "dark age," and later scholars accepted that a "new age" began in Europe from the fourteenth century. The term "Middle Ages" referred to the millennium following the fall of Rome. Humanists argued that during the Middle Ages, the Church's total control over people's minds had erased much of the knowledge of the Greeks and Romans. They coined

the term “modern” to describe the period starting in the fifteenth century.

Humanists and later scholars divided history as follows: 5th-14th century as the Middle Ages, with further subdivisions into the “Dark Ages” (5th-8th century), the “Early Middle Ages” (9th-11th century), and the “High Middle Ages” (11th-14th century), with the 15th century marking the beginning of the “Modern Age.” However, recent historians have questioned this division. With more research into this period, scholars are now hesitant to draw such rigid distinctions between centuries, suggesting it may be unfair to label any era as a “Dark Age.”

### 1.2.3 Renaissance in Literature

The achievements of Italian Renaissance scholars and writers are best exemplified by the work of **Francis Petrarch** (1304-1374), the first true humanist. Francis Petrarch is widely considered one of the earliest true humanists of the Italian Renaissance. A devout Christian, Petrarch criticised Scholasticism for its emphasis on abstract reasoning rather than providing practical guidance for ethical living and salvation. He believed Christian writers should cultivate eloquence in their work to inspire virtuous behaviour in others. Petrarch saw the greatest examples of literary excellence in ancient classical authors, whom he believed offered profound ethical wisdom. Consequently, he dedicated much of his life to recovering lost Latin texts and writing his own moral treatises in the classical tradition.

Aside from his scholarly pursuits, Petrarch is also renowned for his literary contributions, especially his poetry. Although he held his Latin works in high regard, it was his Italian vernacular sonnets, written for his beloved Laura, that gained lasting popularity. These ‘Petrarchan sonnets’, drawing inspiration from the chivalric troubadour tradition, became a hallmark of Renaissance poetry,

admired and imitated for their form and themes.

Petrarch’s personal ideal for human life was one of contemplation and asceticism, emphasising solitude and introspection. However, his views were later challenged by the rise of “civic humanism” in Florence between 1400 and 1450. Thinkers like Leonardo Bruni and Leon Battista Alberti, while agreeing with Petrarch on the importance of eloquence and classical study, believed human nature was better suited for action and service to family, society, and the state. They viewed ambition and the pursuit of glory as noble pursuits to be encouraged, asserting that human progress was intrinsically tied to mankind’s ability to master the earth and its resources. Alberti’s *On the Family* (1443) reflects this shift, highlighting the significance of the nuclear family for human well-being. However, within this framework, women were confined to domestic roles, with Alberti claiming that men were naturally more industrious, while women’s purpose was to nurture and raise the next generation.

Civic humanists, unlike Petrarch, valued active life and greatly expanded the study of classical literature, particularly Greek texts. Many discovered new Latin works, but more importantly, Greek scholars who had migrated to Italy in the 15th century taught Greek and introduced the achievements of ancient Greece to Italian scholars. This led to Italians travelling to the Near East in search of Greek manuscripts, with Giovanni Aurispa bringing back hundreds of texts, including works by Sophocles, Euripides, and Thucydides, thus making ancient Greek literature available to Western Europe.

**Lorenzo Valla** (1407-1457), a Renaissance thinker, was not fully aligned with the civic humanists but still contributed significantly to scholarship. A master of grammar, rhetoric, and text analysis, Valla



used his expertise to discredit historical forgeries, most notably proving that the *Donation of Constantine* was a medieval fabrication. This exposed the document as anachronistic and challenged medieval assumptions. Valla's work introduced the concept of anachronism into textual study and historical analysis. He also applied his linguistic skills to clarify the meaning of St. Paul's writings in the New Testament, contributing to the connection between Italian Renaissance scholarship and Northern European Christian humanism.

From about 1450 to 1600, Neoplatonism dominated Italian thought, blending the ideas of Plato, Plotinus, and ancient mysticism with Christianity. Leading figures like Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, members of the Platonic Academy in Florence, promoted these ideas. Ficino's notable achievement was translating Plato's works into Latin, making them widely accessible. Although he moved away from ethics to metaphysics, his philosophy emphasised the soul's longing for the other world. Pico, on the other hand, believed in human potential to unite with God but rejected engagement in public affairs.

Italian literature saw notable achievements in sixteenth-century with figures like Machiavelli (whose works *La Mandragola*; *La Clizia*; *Belfagor*), Michelangelo (with sonnets), and Ludovico Ariosto, whose *Orlando Furioso* became the foremost Renaissance epic. Ariosto's work, full of lyrical fantasy, satirised medieval heroism and reflected the disillusionment of the late Renaissance, focusing on pleasure and aesthetic enjoyment rather than idealistic values.

### 1.2.3.1 Artists and Realism

Formal education was not the only way through which humanists shaped the minds of their age. Art, architecture, and books

were wonderfully effective in transmitting humanists ideas. Artists were inspired by studying works of the past. The material remains of Roman culture were sought with as much excitement as ancient texts: a thousand years after the fall of Rome, fragments of art were discovered in ancient Rome, and other deserted cities. Their admiration for the figures of 'perfectly proportioned men and women sculpted so many centuries ago made Italian sculptors want to continue that tradition. In 1416, Donatello (1386-1466 CE) broke new ground with his lifelike statues.

Artists' pursuit of accuracy was aided by the work of scientists. To understand bone structures, they visited medical school laboratories. Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564 CE), a Belgian physician and professor of medicine at the University of Padua, was the first to perform human dissections, marking the beginning of modern physiology.

Painters discovered that a grasp of geometry improved their understanding of perspective, while paying attention to the changing quality of light gave their works a three-dimensional effect. The use of oil paint also enhanced the richness of colour in their art. The colours and designs of costumes in many paintings show the influence of Chinese and Persian art, which the Mongols helped make accessible. As a result, the study of anatomy, geometry, and physics, combined with a keen sense of beauty, brought a new realism to Italian art, a style that persisted until the nineteenth century.

### 1.2.4 Renaissance in Art and Architecture

The most enduring accomplishments of the Italian Renaissance were in the realm of art, particularly painting. While Giotto's early works around 1300 CE laid the foundation for Italian painting, it wasn't until the fifteenth century that it reached its full potential. This development was fuelled by the discovery

of linear perspective, the study of human anatomy, and the introduction of chiaroscuro (light and shade). By this time, the increase in private wealth and the rise of secularism allowed artists greater freedom, with many moving away from religious themes to explore portraits, beauty, and intellectual subjects. The introduction of oil painting from Flanders allowed for more detailed work and greater flexibility in creating art.

Florence was home to many of the period's most prominent painters, beginning with **Masaccio** (1401-1428), who was instrumental in portraying nature realistically. His use of perspective and chiaroscuro influenced generations of artists. Following Masaccio, **Sandro Botticelli** (1444-1510) became famous for his depictions of both religious and classical themes. Botticelli's works, such as *The Birth of Venus* and *The Allegory of Spring*, were influenced by Neoplatonism and emphasised beauty and philosophical ideas. Later, he became a follower of the preacher Savonarola, which led him to produce more religious works, including *Mystic Nativity*.

**Leonardo da Vinci** (1452–1519) is celebrated as one of the greatest artists of the Renaissance and a quintessential "Renaissance man." A master of multiple disciplines, including painting, architecture, engineering, and anatomy, he defied the

expectations of mere craftsmanship, seeking artistic and scientific perfection. Born in Florence, he established an art workshop of the age 25 and gained the patronage of Lorenzo de' Medici. However, his slow working process and tendency to leave projects unfinished frustrated patrons, leading him to move to Milan in 1482, where he found greater creative freedom. Following the French invasion of Milan in 1499, he traveled across Italy before spending his final years under the patronage of King Francis I of France.

Leonardo's art defined the High Renaissance with its naturalism, psychological depth, and technical mastery. His study of anatomy, achieved through illegal dissections, allowed him to depict the human body with exceptional accuracy. His masterpieces include *The Virgin of the Rocks*, which demonstrates his scientific precision, *The Last Supper*, a psychological exploration of Christ's announcement of betrayal, and *The Mona Lisa*, renowned for its enigmatic expression and timeless beauty. Art critic Bernard Berenson praised Leonardo for capturing the depth of the human soul like no other artist.

The High Renaissance, beginning around 1490, also saw the rise of the Venetian school, led by artists like Giovanni Bellini, Giorgione,



Fig 1.2.1 The Last Supper



Fig 1.2.2 The Creation of Adam

and Titian. Venetian art emphasised vivid colours, rich textures, and sensual beauty, influenced by Eastern artistic traditions. In contrast, Rome became the artistic center in the early 16th century, with Raphael emerging as a key figure. Inspired by Leonardo but favouring symbolism and allegory, Raphael's works, such as *The School of Athens*, explored philosophical themes, while his Madonnas radiated warmth and harmony. His art, deeply humanistic, contrasted with Leonardo's enigmatic figures, solidifying the diverse artistic landscape of the Renaissance.

**Michelangelo** (1475-1564), a defining figure of the High Renaissance, was a multi-talented artist-painter, sculptor, architect, and poet-who was deeply influenced by Neoplatonism and focused on expressing timeless, abstract truths. Unlike Leonardo, who captured natural phenomena, Michelangelo's work was idealistic, emphasising the potential of the human form, particularly the male figure, as a symbol of the Renaissance belief in individual potential.

His greatest contributions to painting are found in the Sistine Chapel. His frescoes on the ceiling, painted between 1508 and 1512, depict scenes from the Book of Genesis, such as *The Creation of Adam*. These works reveal his adherence to classical ideals of harmony

and restraint, while affirming the grandeur of Creation and humanity's heroic potential. A quarter-century later, his *Last Judgment* (1536) on the altar wall demonstrated a shift in style, embracing dramatic tension and distortion to express a more pessimistic view of humanity, burdened by fear and guilt.

In sculpture, Michelangelo helped redefine the art form, advancing the creation of freestanding statues, which were no longer confined to architectural structures like columns or tombs. His early masterpiece, *David* (1501), exemplifies his classical style-idealised, well-proportioned, and heroic, reflecting the Renaissance confidence in human potential. However, his later works, such as *Moses* (c. 1515), shifted toward emotional intensity, with exaggerated anatomical forms conveying deeper emotional states, like the prophet's righteous anger.

Michelangelo's later sculptures, including the *Descent from the Cross*, reflect his growing introspection and mastery of pathos, depicting the Virgin Mary's sorrow over Christ's body with profound emotional depth. His evolving style, from classical restraint to dramatic emotion, mirrors the progression of his thoughts on humanity, making him the embodiment of the Renaissance ideal of artistic genius.

**Donatello** (1386-1466) is considered the first major master of Renaissance sculpture, breaking away from Gothic traditions and infusing his work with a fresh sense of energy and individuality. His bronze *David* was the first free-standing nude since ancient times, establishing a precedent for celebrating the life-size nude. While the posture of Donatello's *David* reflects classical influences, he portrayed the figure as a youthful and slender individual, rather than a robust Greek athlete. Later in his career, Donatello created the bronze *Gattamelata*, the first monumental equestrian statue in bronze since Roman times, further demonstrating his commitment to honoring contemporary secular figures.

**Filippo Brunelleschi** (1377–1446) was a pioneering architect and engineer from Florence, recognised as one of the foremost figures in early Renaissance architecture. His most celebrated achievement is the construction of the dome for the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore (the Duomo) in Florence, built between 1420 and 1436. This monumental task was accomplished through innovative machines designed by Brunelleschi, showcasing his ingenuity. Much of what is known about his life and contributions comes from a biography written by his contemporary, Antonio di Tuccio Manetti, in the 1480s.

Beyond the Duomo, Brunelleschi made significant contributions to Renaissance architecture with works such as the *Ospedale degli Innocenti*, where he blended classical influences with late-medieval forms. His design of the Basilica of San Lorenzo introduced a new sense of regularity and visual harmony, which became a hallmark of Renaissance architecture. In his designs for the Pazzi Chapel and the Church of Santo Spirito, Brunelleschi demonstrated a mastery of geometry and classical principles. He also experimented with centralised architectural

structures, as seen in his unfinished design for Santa Maria degli Angeli.

While his residential and military architecture is harder to verify, Brunelleschi's influence on city planning and fortifications was also notable. His architectural innovations revolutionised Renaissance design, particularly in church buildings and urban layouts.

Brunelleschi's work represented a unique fusion of artistic vision and scientific innovation. He was cautious about sharing his ideas, understanding the importance of protecting his intellectual property from rivals. He believed that the artist should possess both expertise and education, as illustrated by his statement about convening a council of experts to deliberate on construction techniques. His design principles, particularly those embodied in the Duomo, became foundational for future generations of architects.

**Sandro Botticelli** (1445–1510), a renowned painter of the Florentine Renaissance, is best known for masterpieces like *The Birth of Venus* and *La Primavera*, which are iconic representations of the Renaissance spirit. His works often depicted figures from classical mythology, such as the god Mercury, Venus, and Primavera, reflecting the era's fascination with ancient themes. *Primavera*, set in a garden, has sparked various interpretations, with some linking it to Neoplatonism, emphasising ideal love and beauty, while others see it as an allegory or a purely aesthetic arrangement. Botticelli's focus on mythological subjects and near-nude figures marked a shift from traditional Christian themes and introduced art as a source of pleasure.

Botticelli also excelled in secular portraiture, with surviving works such as his portrait of a young man holding a medal of Cosimo de' Medici, showcasing his skill

and exposure to Flemish art. His association with the Medici family led to mythological works blending Classical and medieval themes. Influenced by Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Botticelli created illustrations for it, later turning to darker themes like Hell and Purgatory as Florence became turbulent under the influence of the preacher Girolamo Savonarola.

In his later career, Botticelli's style shifted towards mannerism, characterised by slender figures and exaggerated gestures. This change reflected his spiritual tensions and his involvement with Savonarola's reformist ideas, as seen in works like *Mystic Crucifixion* (1497) and *Mystic Nativity* (1500). His later paintings also showed his support for republicanism, as seen in *The Tragedy of Lucretia* (c. 1499), condemning the Medici. Despite his eventual obscurity, Botticelli's work was rediscovered in the 19th century and remains widely admired, with many pieces housed in the Uffizi Gallery.

**Albrecht Dürer** (1471–1528) was a leading German painter and printmaker, regarded as the greatest artist of the German Renaissance. His diverse body of work includes altarpieces, religious art, portraits, and engravings, with notable works like the *Apocalypse* woodcut series (1498) showcasing Gothic influences. Dürer's self-portrait, in which he poses in a noble coat with a gesture reminiscent of Christ, marked a significant shift in self-portraiture. The painting emphasised the artist as an individual genius, central to Renaissance Humanism, with Dürer's signature and a statement declaring his self-painting at the age of 28.

Dürer's time in Italy exposed him to Renaissance Humanism, and he became a key figure in Northern Humanism, blending classical models with local cultural and religious practices. His friendship with scholar Willibald Pirckheimer played a

key role in Nuremberg's intellectual circles. Later in life, Dürer's interest in geometry, proportion, and perspective led him to create works like *Four Books on Measurement* and *Four Books on Human Proportion*. Influenced by Leonardo da Vinci, Dürer embodied the Renaissance ideal of the artist as both a craftsman and intellectual, producing art that reflected the energy of an entire culture, not just his personal vision.

**Raphael**, the great painters of the High Renaissance achieved their most significant works in the first half of the 16th century, a period when Italian Renaissance art reached its zenith. During this time, Rome emerged as the primary artistic center of Italy, though the influence of the Florentine school remained strong. Among the eminent painters of this era, two deserve particular attention, one of whom is Raphael (1483–1520), a native of Urbino and arguably the most cherished artist of the Renaissance.

Raphael's enduring appeal lies in his ennobling humanism, as he depicted humanity with temperance, wisdom, and dignity. While influenced by Leonardo da Vinci and borrowing elements of his style, Raphael adopted a more symbolic and allegorical approach in his work. His *Disputa* represents the dialectical connection between the heavenly and earthly Church, with theologians debating the Eucharist below a brilliant sky, while saints and the Holy Trinity preside in the clouds above. Similarly, his *School of Athens* serves as an allegory of the philosophical conflict between Platonism and Aristotelianism. Plato (portrayed as Leonardo) points upward to signify his belief in the spiritual realm of Ideas, while Aristotle gestures downward to emphasise the material grounding of concepts.

### Disputa

Raphael is also renowned for his portraits

and depictions of Madonnas. His Madonnas, in particular, are characterised by their softness and warmth, imbuing them with a sweetness and piety distinct from the enigmatic and more detached Madonnas of Leonardo da Vinci.

**Caravaggio** (1571–1610) was an influential Italian painter known for his striking realism and emotional intensity, particularly in large-scale religious works. Born Michelangelo Merisi, he trained in Milan before moving to Rome in 1590, where he gained the patronage of a cardinal. His series of paintings on the life of St. Matthew (1599–1603) brought him both fame and controversy, establishing him as a leading figure in Roman art.

Caravaggio rejected traditional religious art conventions, using ordinary people as models and portraying them with unflinching realism. His use of tenebrism, dramatic contrasts of light and shadow, became a hallmark of his style and a defining feature of Baroque painting. One of his notable works is a self-portrait as Bacchus, the god of intoxication, in which he presents a more hedonistic and psychological portrayal, deviating from the idealised beauty of the Renaissance.

In his later years, Caravaggio received several commissions, including *The Deposition of Christ* and *Death of the Virgin*. The latter was rejected by the Carmelites for its untraditional portrayal of the Virgin, which contributed to Caravaggio's controversial reputation. Despite his turbulent personal life and criticism, his innovative style significantly shaped the Baroque movement and influenced European art for generations.

## 1.2.5 Music

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, music in Western Europe reached remarkable heights, contributing to the Renaissance alongside painting and sculpture.

Unlike visual arts, which were inspired by ancient models, music evolved independently, with roots in medieval Christian traditions. Secular music gained importance, blending with sacred music to create more colourful and emotionally rich compositions. The distinction between sacred and secular music became less rigid, and music emerged as a serious, independent art form.

European regions vied for musical leadership, with patronage from prosperous Italian cities and northern European courts driving progress. The earlier *Ars Nova* movement in the 14th century, represented by Francesco Landini and Guillaume de Machaut, laid the foundation for rich secular music and complex ecclesiastical motets. By the 15th century, music in the Burgundian court blended French, Flemish, and Italian styles, later evolving into national schools across Europe. Prominent composers like Roland de Lassus and Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina refined polyphonic choral music, particularly for Catholic church services. In England, the Tudor monarchs supported music, leading to the revitalisation of the Italian madrigal and the development of original songs and instrumental music, exemplified by composer William Byrd. Music proficiency reached a high level, with part-singing being popular among the educated elite.

While counterpoint was advanced, the modern harmonic system was still emerging, leaving room for future experimentation. Renaissance music, with composers like Lassus, Palestrina, and Byrd, stands as a monumental achievement, now gaining renewed appreciation through recordings and performances. These composers are considered as integral to the Renaissance as its great painters.

## 1.2.6 Renaissance Science

The sixteenth and early seventeenth

centuries witnessed remarkable scientific achievements, though these were not primarily driven by Renaissance humanism. Humanists, focused on eloquence and morality, largely dismissed science as irrelevant or speculative. However, two intellectual trends helped pave the way for scientific progress. First, Neoplatonism encouraged new perspectives, despite its mystical nature, influencing figures like Copernicus and Kepler. Second, the revival of mechanistic interpretations, inspired by Archimedes, laid the groundwork for Galileo's empirical approach to science.

Another development was the merging of theory and practice. Unlike medieval scholars, Renaissance artists and engineers combined practical expertise with scientific inquiry. This shift was further aided by the declining influence of universities and a growing interest in alchemy and astrology, which, despite their unscientific nature, led to the establishment of laboratories and observational practices.

The period's most revolutionary scientific accomplishment was the heliocentric model proposed by Copernicus, who, influenced by Neoplatonic ideas, argued that the Earth and planets revolve around the sun. Though initially met with resistance due to biblical contradictions and common-sense perceptions, his ideas were refined by Kepler, who introduced the concepts of elliptical orbits and variable planetary speed, and Galileo, who provided observational evidence through telescopic discoveries.

Galileo also made major contributions to physics, challenging Aristotelian theories on motion and proposing that all objects fall at the same rate in a vacuum. Leonardo da Vinci, though primarily known as an artist, laid the groundwork for many scientific and engineering innovations, including early ideas about gravity.

Advances in medicine and anatomy were

equally significant. Paracelsus emphasised observation-based medical practice, linking chemistry and medicine. Michael Servetus discovered pulmonary circulation, while William Harvey later described the full circulation of blood. Andreas Vesalius revolutionised anatomy through direct human dissection and detailed anatomical illustrations, making him a pioneer of modern physiology. Ultimately, the Renaissance was a period of immense scientific transformation, fostering new methodologies, merging disciplines, and laying the foundation for modern science.

### 1.2.7 Political Thought

The medieval world was dominated by theological political thought. It was mainly scholastic and therefore Christian in nature. It was during the Renaissance period that secular political philosophy began to emerge. **Dante**, one of the leading writers of the Renaissance period, was also a political thinker. In his book *The Monarch*, he stated that the sovereign should be supreme in non-religious matters. Marsilius of Padua in his book *Defender of Peace* criticised Pope's political intervention. While many Italian thinkers were more expressive than original, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) stood out as a political philosopher.

**Niccolò Machiavelli** (1469–1527) stands apart in Renaissance thought, pioneering a realistic and unsentimental approach to politics. He rejected idealistic views of political ethics, emphasising the need for rulers to focus solely on maintaining power and securing the safety of the state. Machiavelli's writings reflect the turbulent political situation in Italy during his time, which was rife with foreign invasions and internal divisions. As a diplomat for the republic of Florence, he admired Cesare Borgia's ruthless, pragmatic state-building methods and believed that similar ruthlessness

was necessary for Italy's unification.

Machiavelli's most famous works include *The Prince*, where he asserts that rulers must prioritise the survival of the state, disregarding ideals of justice or morality. He believed that all humans are driven by self-interest, particularly in pursuit of power and wealth, and that rulers could not rely on the loyalty of their subjects. Additionally, his *Discourses on Livy* praised ancient Roman republicanism, advocating for constitutionalism, liberty, and the separation of religion from politics. Machiavelli's ultimate vision for Italy was its unification, but he believed this could only be achieved through forceful and ruthless actions. Machiavelli's direct observations of political life and his radical departure from traditional moral views had a significant and lasting influence on the field of political philosophy.

Contrasting Machiavelli, Baldesar Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* (1528) offered guidelines for aristocratic conduct, promoting the ideal of the "Renaissance man" who was accomplished in many areas. Castiglione also advocated for women's roles beyond domestic confines, offering them a more independent social function, especially in aristocratic circles.

Another important thinker of this period was **Hobbes** of England. He was well known for his theory of the social contract. **John Locke**, another political thinker of this age, also advocated a social contract theory in his work *Two Treatises of Government*. The political thinkers of this period wrote about the ruthless nature of power politics and the tactics of state building. Renaissance political thought led to the development of nation states in later centuries.

Renaissance had far reaching consequences in the history of the world. It was largely representing the dawn of the modern age. Ushering in a revolution in

thought, Renaissance created a spirit of enquiry and critical analysis. Renaissance gave birth to a new system of education. Its curriculum included humanities and sciences, which substantially contributed to the rise of modern culture. It greatly advanced the development of physical sciences in Europe. The Renaissance spirit prompted people to challenge many of the traditional ideas, beliefs and institutions. They began to question rather than accept timidly. It influenced their perception of religion and the Church, thereby laying the groundwork for the Reformation.

### 1.2.8 Decline of Italian Renaissance

The decline of the Italian Renaissance began around 1550 after two centuries of flourishing culture, with several factors contributing to its downfall. One major cause was the French invasion of 1494, when King Charles VIII of France sought to conquer Italy, leading to a series of wars that lasted nearly a century. The French captured Florence and Naples, causing a shift in power that sparked ongoing conflict. Despite brief victories, the wars culminated in the 1527 sack of Rome by Spanish and German troops, which devastated the city. Following these events, Spain took control of large parts of Italy, installing puppet rulers who lacked the independence to inspire cultural progress.

Additionally, Italy's economic dominance declined as new trade routes shifted from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, diminishing Italy's role as the center of global commerce. This, combined with the economic strain of warfare and Spanish taxation, resulted in reduced financial support for the arts.

The Counter-Reformation also played a key role in stifling the Renaissance. The Catholic Church, seeking to curb Protestantism, imposed strict censorship on intellectual and artistic works. Michelangelo's *Last*

*Judgment* was even censored for depicting too many nude figures, while the church's harsh inquisitions led to the execution of philosophers like Giordano Bruno and the persecution of Galileo for his heliocentric views.

Despite these challenges, Italy continued to produce significant cultural achievements. Mannerism emerged as a new artistic style between 1550 and 1600, influenced by Michelangelo's later works, and in the seventeenth century, the Baroque style developed under ecclesiastical patronage. However, the free-spirited culture of the Renaissance was no longer able to flourish in the same way, as the Church's influence became increasingly dominant.

### 1.2.9 Northern European Renaissance

After 1500, the Renaissance that began in Italy spread across Europe as northern regions became more politically stable and prosperous, fostering art and literature. Intellectual exchange intensified through students studying in Italy, battles involving France and Spain on Italian soil, and the migration of Italian thinkers like Leonardo da Vinci to northern courts. This expansion transformed the Renaissance into an international movement, thriving in northern Europe even as it declined in Italy.

The northern Renaissance differed from the Italian in being less secular due to the region's stronger ties to medieval traditions and a less urbanised, more nation-state-focused society. Northern universities prioritised theological studies, and cathedrals dominated towns, reflecting a cultural hegemony rooted in Christian traditions. Italian Renaissance ideals were adapted to these preexisting traditions, particularly in the intellectual movement of Christian humanism. While northern humanists agreed with Italian counterparts on rejecting medieval

Scholasticism, they emphasised biblical and religious teachings over pagan antiquity.

Similarly, northern artists adopted classical techniques from Italy but retained a stronger Christian influence, rarely depicting classical or nude subjects. The northern Renaissance represented a fusion of Italian ideals with northern traditions, emphasising Christian values over secularism.

**Desiderius Erasmus** known as "the prince of the Christian humanists," was a key figure in the northern Renaissance, influencing thought and literature. Born near Rotterdam, he entered a monastery at a young age, where he developed a love for classical and religious texts. After leaving the monastery, he studied at the University of Paris but rejected its Scholasticism. Erasmus spent much of his life travelling, teaching, writing, and building relationships with intellectuals across Europe, eventually settling in Basel, Switzerland, where he became a cultural leader.

Erasmus's contributions were both literary and doctrinal. As a master of Latin prose, he used wit and irony to create works that critique society, such as *Colloquies*, which mocked kings, priests, and theologians. His Christian humanism emphasised a "philosophy of Christ," advocating for the simplicity of Gospel and moral reform. His *Praise of Folly*, *Handbook of the Christian Knight*, and *Complaint of Peace* critiqued societal issues, while his Greek New Testament aimed to correct errors in biblical texts and clarify Christ's teachings.

Erasmus's work influenced figures like Sir Thomas More, who wrote *Utopia*, and Ulrich von Hutten, who defended Reformation ideals. Alongside other Christian humanists like John Colet and Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, Erasmus contributed to the editing of biblical texts and advocated for piety. However, as the Protestant Reformation

grew, the Christian humanist movement became fragmented, as many intellectuals struggled to reconcile their ideals with the divided religious landscape.

Despite the decline of Christian humanism after 1525, the northern Renaissance thrived in literary and artistic forms. Figures like Pierre de Ronsard, Edmund Spenser, and François Rabelais advanced poetry and prose, with Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel* becoming a beloved satirical masterpiece. This era blended humanist ideals with innovative artistic expression, leaving a lasting cultural legacy.

**François Rabelais'** *Gargantua and Pantagruel* utilised the legendary giants' adventures to convey his naturalistic philosophy, blending humour, satire, and a glorification of human nature. Like Erasmus, Rabelais criticised religious ceremonialism, scholasticism, and superstition, but he differed by using crude, accessible French to engage a broader audience and avoid moralism. The story celebrates life-affirming human instincts, exemplified by the utopian

“abbey of Thélème,” where the rule “do what thou wouldest” fosters a free, non-repressive environment.

Rabelais' themes mirrored the distinctive architecture of the northern Renaissance, such as the Loire châteaux, which fused late-medieval Gothic with classical elements. French architects like Pierre Lescot also adopted Italian Renaissance styles, as seen in the Louvre's classical facade.

In northern Renaissance painting, Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) was pivotal in incorporating Italian techniques like proportion and perspective into northern art. However, Dürer maintained Christian ideals, as seen in works like *St. Jerome and Knight, Death, and Devil*, reflecting the values of Christian humanism. Though Dürer never completed a portrait of Erasmus, Hans Holbein the Younger (1497–1543) succeeded, creating memorable, naturalistic portraits of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, exemplifying the Renaissance's focus on individuality and the human spirit.

## Recap

- ◆ Renaissance means “rebirth,” marking revival of Graeco-Roman culture and learning
- ◆ Originated in Italy (1300–1500 CE), later spread across Europe
- ◆ Emphasised humanism, secularism, individualism, and rational thought
- ◆ Asian influences shaped Renaissance through translations, sciences, and printing
- ◆ Humanism shifted focus from theology to humanities and individual dignity
- ◆ Renaissance art prioritised realism, perspective, anatomy and secular themes

- ◆ Scientific advancements included heliocentrism, anatomy and empirical methods
- ◆ Literature flourished with humanist writers like Petrarch and Erasmus
- ◆ The Renaissance laid foundations for modern education, statehood, and science

## Objective Questions

1. What is the meaning of Renaissance?
2. Where could we trace the traits of Renaissance first?
3. Which modern nation state was the homeland of ancient Roman civilisation?
4. What is the most important feature of the European Renaissance?
5. Who is known as the father of Humanism?
6. Which Renaissance thinker challenged the authenticity of the “Donation of Constantine”?
7. Which Renaissance artist painted the ‘Mona Lisa’?
8. What was the major scientific contribution of Copernicus?
9. Name the author of the work *Utopia*.
10. Which Renaissance artist is famous for ‘The School of Athens’?
11. Who sculpted the iconic statue of David?
12. Which artistic technique developed during the Renaissance added depth and realism to paintings?

## Answers

1. Rebirth
2. Italy

3. Italy
4. Humanism
5. Petrarch (Italian poet)
6. Lorenzo Valla
7. Leonardo da Vinci
8. Heliocentric theory
9. Thomas More
10. Raphael
11. Michelangelo
12. Chiaroscuro

## Assignments

1. Examine why the Renaissance began in Italy? Discuss the factors that contributed to its emergence.
2. How did Renaissance literature reflect humanist ideals? Give examples from important writers.
3. Discuss how Renaissance scientific advancements challenge traditional-medieval beliefs?
4. How did Renaissance political thought differ from medieval political ideas?
5. What role did Christian humanists like Erasmus play in the Northern Renaissance?
6. What were the key factors that led to the decline of the Renaissance in Italy?

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# Reformation and Counter Reformation

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ comprehend the idea of Reformation
- ◆ examine how the Protestantism changed the entire socio- political and cultural life of Europe
- ◆ differentiate between Reformation and Counter Reformation
- ◆ explain the role of key figures such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli in the Reformation movement

### Prerequisites

The Reformation and Counter-Reformation were major religious movements that transformed Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Reformation arose due to corruption in the Catholic Church, including the sale of indulgences and financial excesses, leading reformers like Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli to challenge papal authority. This resulted in the formation of Protestant denominations and a shift in religious, social, and political structures. In response, the Catholic Church launched the Counter-Reformation to regain its influence. The Council of Trent reaffirmed Catholic doctrines, reformed clergy practices, and promoted new religious orders like the Jesuits. The Inquisition was strengthened to combat heresy, and Baroque art was used to inspire faith. While the movement preserved Catholicism in parts of Europe, it also fueled religious conflicts. This unit explores the origins, key figures, and impacts of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. It highlights how these movements reshaped religious practices, political structures, and cultural life across Europe.

## Keywords

Protestants, Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, Zwinglianism, Council of Trent, Jesuits, Oratorian, Inquisitions, Witchcraft Trials

## Discussion

The Reformation was a significant turning point in European history, extending beyond the Church's fragmentation and the rise of Protestant theology. It triggered profound social and political changes in 16th and 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Traditionally, the Reformation refers to the division within the Roman Catholic Church, which had been under papal authority for centuries. This split led to the emergence of various Christian denominations, including Lutherans, Calvinists, Puritans, Anabaptists, and Anglicans.

Until the mid-11th century, Christianity remained unified. However, Western and Central Europe came under papal control, while the Byzantine Church followed the Patriarch of Constantinople. Disputes over supremacy and church revenues led to a major schism in 1054, resulting in the Western Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Catholic Church played a crucial role in maintaining religious unity among the numerous feudal states. In the absence of political cohesion, it helped stabilise social structures. Popes exerted influence over rulers' political and financial matters, effectively unifying European feudalism. However, as feudalism weakened in the late medieval period, its decline also impacted the Church's authority.

### 1.3.1 Origin of The Reformation

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Catholic Church faced

significant institutional challenges due to the papal authority's failure to provide spiritual leadership. Contemporary writings highlight growing ecclesiastical corruption and inefficiency, as church leaders were unable to fulfill the people's desire for personal devotion.

Economic changes and the feudal crisis further strained the Church's finances, intensifying criticism of papal authority. To sustain itself, the papacy developed an extensive bureaucratic and fiscal system, collecting various forms of revenue from distant churches. These included 'Tents' (a tenth of income sent to the Pope), 'First Fruits' (offerings at the start of the harvest), and, most controversially, the 'Sale of Indulgences' - where individuals could purchase pardons for grave sins in exchange for large payments. Financial difficulties also widened the gap between the upper and lower clergy. High-ranking officials, such as cardinals and bishops, who often came from noble backgrounds, amassed great wealth, while lower clergy, typically from common families, remained impoverished. This growing divide further fuelled dissatisfaction within the Church.

The medieval world was a rigid, feudal society dominated by the Catholic Church and its clergy, influencing all aspects of life from birth to death. However, significant developments in the late Middle Ages paved the way for reformers. A decline in population, coupled with falling agricultural

and manufacturing output, weakened the feudal structure. Landowners suffered from reduced revenues due to declining rents, particularly in western Germany, where economic hardships made nobles increasingly reliant on territorial princes, whose authority was growing.

Artisans and peasants faced economic distress due to low wages and high prices. Their grievances found a voice in the rational appeals of Martin Luther and John Calvin. Marx and Engels viewed the Reformation as a period of social transformation, marking the rise of the bourgeoisie. The movement reflected the emergence of an educated elite of laymen eager to assume the spiritual and administrative roles of a discredited clergy.

A major theological shift during the Reformation was the reduced role of sacraments in salvation, which diminished the clergy's authority and boosted people's independence and self-confidence. Additionally, the weakening of the Holy Roman Emperor's power reduced the influence of the papacy. Though religious in nature, the Reformation was also driven by secular factors, including the Renaissance, which encouraged critical thinking and challenged established authority. Historians debate the extent of humanism's impact on the Reformation, but it is widely accepted that Renaissance ideals, which rejected monastic renunciation and promoted secular attitudes, accelerated the movement.

Alister McGrath describes the Reformation as emerging from a complex mix of social and ideological factors. The rise of nationalism, increasing political power in southern German states and Swiss cities, the emergence of influential personalities, and growing theological awareness during a period of crisis in the Church all contributed to the movement. However, the nature of the Reformation varied across different regions, shaped by local circumstances.

### 1.3.2 Protestantism

The decline of the Holy Roman Empire and its religious strongholds in Europe accelerated after the Babylonian Captivity and the Great Schism (1348–1417). During this period, as many as three Popes simultaneously claimed authority - one in Rome, another in France, and a third in Pisa, Italy. By 1500, the papacy had returned to Rome but was plagued by corruption. Popes raised taxes and tithes (one-tenth of church members' income) to fund the Papal States' standing army. They also engaged in simony, the sale of church offices, and the controversial practice of selling indulgences, where people paid for the forgiveness of sins.

Meanwhile, the devastating effects of the plague (1348–1700s) severely impacted the social and spiritual lives of Europe's lower classes. At the same time, France and England were locked in the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453), further deepening the crisis. As a result, many Christians felt that the church had failed in its mission, creating an urgent demand for reform within both the church and the Holy Roman Empire.

#### 1.3.2.1 Early Reformers

The most influential figures in religious reform included Meister (Johannes) Eckhart, John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, Huldrych Zwingli, and John Calvin. Their efforts sparked the Protestant Reformation, a movement named after the act of "protest" against the Catholic Church. A key factor in spreading Protestant beliefs was the invention of the movable type printing press and the mass production of the Gutenberg Bible in the mid-15th century. This allowed the idea to spread that individuals could interpret the Bible without the mediation of a priest.

John Wycliffe played a crucial role in the early Protestant movement. He was the first to translate the Bible from Latin into

English, making it accessible to laypeople. His followers, known as Lollards, also rejected the Catholic doctrine of communion, which viewed bread and wine as the literal body and blood of Christ. Meanwhile, the German mystic Meister Eckhart emphasised that spiritual conversion came through a personal relationship with God. Both Wycliffe and Eckhart were condemned as heretics by the Catholic Church, along with many of their followers.

Though early reformers faced suppression, widespread religious dissent did not gain mass support until the time of Martin Luther. As a German monk and university professor in Wittenberg, Luther became a leading figure in the Reformation. At that time, Germany lacked a strong central government, making it especially susceptible to church corruption. Widespread frustration among the population over these corrupt practices created fertile ground for religious transformation.

Martin Luther's protest against indulgences in 1517 was part of this broader tradition, but his movement gained unprecedented momentum due to the printing press, which enabled the rapid dissemination of his ideas. In 1520, Luther expanded his critique into a comprehensive condemnation of the Catholic Church, positioning himself as the leader of the Reformation. The Roman hierarchy, hesitant due to political pressures, responded weakly, allowing Protestant ideas to spread quickly. By 1535, many imperial free cities and princely states had embraced the movement, and when they united in the Schmalkaldic League, Protestantism became a lasting force within the Holy Roman Empire.

Zwinglianism, founded by Ulrich Zwingli, was a moderate form of Protestantism in Zürich, differing from Luther's ideas. Zwingli, initially an indifferent Catholic priest, came to believe that Catholic teachings conflicted with the Gospel, leading him to

begin reforming Zürich in 1522. While his reforms resembled Luther's, Zwingli differed on the theology of the Eucharist, believing that Christ's presence was symbolic rather than real. This disagreement prevented a united Protestant front. Zwingli died in battle in 1531, and his movement was absorbed by the more radical ideas of John Calvin.

Anabaptism, which emerged in the 1520s, split from Zwingli's circle over the issue of infant baptism. The Anabaptists believed in adult baptism and saw church membership as a personal decision, rejecting the idea of a state-connected church. Their separatist beliefs made them unpopular with both Catholic and Protestant authorities. Despite its initial appeal, Anabaptism was discredited by extremist actions in Münster in 1534, where radical leaders took control, introduced polygamy, and proclaimed a new kingdom. When Münster was recaptured, the movement faced brutal persecution.

The remaining Anabaptists, including those who formed the Mennonite sect under Menno Simons, maintained the original values of simplicity, pacifism, and strict biblical morality. Anabaptist ideas influenced later religious movements like the Quakers and various Baptist and Pentecostal sects. After Zwingli's death, John Calvin emerged as a key figure in the Swiss Reformation, shaping Geneva into a theocratic state with a structured reformed theology that combined elements of Lutheran and non-Lutheran traditions.

By the mid-16th century, Calvinism revitalised the Reformation as Catholic resistance grew stronger. In France, early Protestant reform efforts were met with persecution, forcing many reformers into exile. Despite this, between 1555 and 1562, over 2,000 Calvinist communities (Huguenots) were established, challenging the fragile French monarchy and sparking the French Wars of Religion. Although



Protestantism never fully triumphed in France, the Edict of Nantes (1598) granted Huguenots a protected minority status.

Calvinism also flourished in the Netherlands, where it built upon existing evangelical traditions and played a major role in the Dutch struggle for independence from Spain. By 1622, Calvinism had become the official religion of the United Provinces. In Scotland, the Reformation merged with a national independence movement (1559–61), leading to the establishment of a Presbyterian church under John Knox's leadership. Elsewhere in Europe, Calvinist churches took root in Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary, while Lutheranism secured a permanent presence in the Baltic and Scandinavia. Despite resistance from the Catholic Church, the Reformation profoundly reshaped European religious, political, and social structures, influencing movements for religious freedom and governance for centuries to come.

The Reformation in England did not follow the typical patterns seen elsewhere. King Henry VIII initiated the break with Rome for political reasons, despite remaining orthodox in religious matters. It was only during the reign of his son, Edward VI (1547-53), that a true Protestant polity was established under the guidance of Thomas Cranmer, who authored the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1549. After a brief return to Catholicism under Mary I (1553-58), Elizabeth I's accession marked the definitive triumph of Protestantism. The Anglican Church developed its own unique structure, often described as Erastian, with Calvinist doctrinal elements.

The Reformation also gave rise to a wide range of religious thinkers, many of whom were not aligned with the major church leaders. Luther faced radical dissent as early as 1521, and Zwingli dealt with similar challenges from the Swiss Brethren.

The Anabaptist movement, which focused on adult baptism, grew rapidly in Germany and northern Europe. However, Anabaptists were persecuted by both Catholics and Protestants, especially after the collapse of the radical Anabaptist kingdom of Münster in 1535. Despite this, Anabaptism persisted, particularly in the Netherlands under the leadership of Menno Simons, whose followers became known as Mennonites.

The Reformation had profound, though unpredictable, cultural and political effects. It contributed to the process of nation-building by weakening the moral and economic power of the Catholic Church. However, Calvinism also posed a challenge to the rise of absolutist monarchies. In cultural terms, while the reformers' rejection of traditional religious art had a negative impact, they also encouraged church music and inspired new artistic traditions, as seen in the work of Rembrandt. Ultimately, the Reformation played a significant role in diversifying European culture in the centuries that followed.

### 1.3.2.2 Impact of Reformation

The European Reformation of the 16th century was a multifaceted and varied movement, impacting the political, social, and economic fabric of Europe. Given Christianity's strong connection to the rulers of Europe, it was inevitable that the Reformation would affect them as well.

#### Political Impact

The Protestant Reformation led to a shift in how the relationship between the state and the church was perceived. One of its immediate consequences was the fragmentation of the Catholic Church into numerous factions, which had long been a unified institution with strict norms governing political, moral, and social behaviour. This division paved the way for a redefined political structure.

Some historians argue that Protestantism both resulted from the rise of European nation-states and helped to shape national identities. In this sense, it can be seen as both a product and a catalyst of political unity in the emerging nation-states of Europe.

### Social Impact

Protestantism emphasised the importance of family life, placing mutual love between husband and wife at its core. Religion, which had deeply influenced everyday life in Europe for centuries, underwent significant changes during the Reformation. Both Protestant and Catholic movements reshaped popular culture, rituals, and festivals. Additionally, the Reformation inspired new forms of art and music. Martin Luther supported the use of art and placed music alongside the word of God, while other Reformers like Zwingli and Calvin opposed music, viewing it as a distraction and advocating for a simpler form of worship. The Catholic Reformation, on the other hand, supported the development of the Baroque style of art, which became prominent in the post-Renaissance period.

### Economic Impact

The Reformation is sometimes seen as a revolutionary event because it represented a challenge to feudalism, marking the rise of a new class. Some historians argue that the religious individualism promoted by the Reformation mirrored the intellectual individualism of Humanism, contributing to the growth of capitalism. M.J. Kitch suggested a strong connection between Protestantism and capitalism, a view famously elaborated by German sociologist Max Weber. Weber argued that Protestant ethics contributed to the spirit of capitalism by creating an intellectual environment in which capitalist ideas could thrive. He clarified that the economic progress of countries before the Reformation was difficult to understand without considering the influence of

Protestantism. Weber's work, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, connected Protestantism to capitalism, moving away from abstract ideas and focusing on its economic aspects. Christopher Hill also supported the theory that Protestantism and capitalism had a mutual influence, noting that Protestantism offered flexible doctrines that helped break the rigid ideological constraints of earlier times.

### 1.3.3 Counter Reformation

The Catholic Reformation, also known as the Counter Reformation, was a reform movement within the Roman Catholic Church during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, many historians avoid using the term "Counter Reformation" as it implies that the Church's reforms were only a reaction to Protestantism. In reality, Catholics had recognised the need for reform as early as the fifteenth century, a century before the Protestant Reformation. By that time, Popes, cardinals, bishops, and priests had become corrupt and self-serving, neglecting their religious duties in favour of personal gain. The Church had amassed more wealth and property than many kings, which disturbed many Catholics both inside and outside the Church.

In the 14th century, the Church faced a crisis that increased calls for reform. The papacy was moved to Avignon, France, in 1307, where it remained for seventy years during the "Babylonian Captivity." When the papacy returned to Rome in 1378, disputes among cardinals led to the Great Schism, where multiple popes vied for control. This conflict ended in 1417, but corruption and power abuse among the clergy worsened, as Popes, cardinals, and bishops from wealthy families lived lavishly while neglecting their duties. In 1527, the sack of Rome by Emperor Charles V's soldiers highlighted the Church's moral failings, further fueling reform efforts.



Throughout the years, many Catholics pushed for change, focusing on enhancing the spiritual mission of the Church. Movements like the *Devotio Moderna* emphasised a deeper religious commitment, with figures like Catherine of Siena and Catherine of Genoa dedicating themselves to serving the poor. Humanist scholars, including John Colet, Thomas More, and Desiderius Erasmus, called for reforms within the Church and better education for clergy, with Erasmus publishing works like *Handbook of the Militant Christian* in 1503.

Monastic groups also emerged, dedicated to Christian teachings, and figures like Girolamo Savonarola, a Dominican monk, became vocal reformers. Known for his passionate sermons, Savonarola criticised the corruption within the Church and called for a return to spiritual values. His prophetic visions, including one predicting the rise of the “Scourge of the Church,” resonated with many. In Florence, he pushed for reforms, severed ties with the Congregation of Lombardy, and advocated for helping the poor. However, his strict religious views and opposition to Florence’s government and the Medici family led to resistance, particularly from the Tiepidi faction. Savonarola’s influence waned when political forces, including Pope Alexander VI, worked against him.

### 1.3.3.1 Challenged by Pope

In 1495, despite being ill with dysentery, Girolamo Savonarola continued to preach and criticise the Church, particularly the Tiepidi. In response, Pope Alexander VI accused him of heresy, false prophecy, and disturbing the peace of the Church, but allowed him to remain in Florence to defend himself. Initially, no evidence was found against Savonarola, but the Pope still forbade him from preaching. In 1496, after public pressure, the Pope allowed Savonarola

to preach during Lent, where he criticised the Church’s corruption. However, his calls for reforms, including stricter dress codes for Florentine women, were rejected, and tensions escalated.

By 1497, the situation worsened as laws restricting his preaching were enforced, and a riot broke out during one of his sermons. Though loyal monks saved him, the Florentine leaders blamed him for the unrest and called for his exile. The Pope excommunicated him and his followers, further dividing Florence. In 1498, the pope demanded that Savonarola either defend his criticisms in Rome or abandon his reforms. The conflict led to trials in April, during which Savonarola and two companions were tortured and eventually signed confessions. Despite insufficient evidence, they were sentenced to death in May 1498. Savonarola and his companions were hanged, their bodies burned, and their ashes scattered in the Arno River to prevent veneration, marking the end of his reform efforts.

### 1.3.3.2 Reforms in Church

Following the death of Savonarola, the rise of Protestantism within thirty years prompted increased calls for reform within the Catholic Church. Many religious and political figures, following a long-standing tradition, sought to hold a general council of bishops to address the issues. A council was held in Rome from 1515 to 1517, known as the Fifth Lateran Council, where reforms were discussed and agreed upon. However, the council ended just before Martin Luther, the German reformer, published his Ninety-Five Theses in 1517, criticising the Church.

Popes did not show significant interest in reform until 1537, when Pope Paul III formed a committee of cardinals to examine the church’s issues. Their report, titled *A Council... for Reforming the Church*,

condemned various corrupt practices, with many abuses being attributed directly to the papacy. Although Pope Paul made several attempts to convene a council, it was repeatedly delayed. In the meantime, he initiated reforms of his own, supporting the formation of new religious communities. In 1540, he approved the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and the Order of Saint Ursula in 1544. In 1542, he established the Congregation of the Roman Inquisition to serve as the final authority on heresy trials.

### 1.3.3.3 Council of Trent

The first session of the Council of Bishops took place in 1545 at Trent in northern Italy. Attendance was limited, with a significant majority of Italian bishops present. While no specific Protestant figures were named in the council's documents, Protestant ideas were discussed. The bishops decided to adopt the Latin Vulgate as the official Bible of the Catholic Church, including books like Judith, Maccabees, and the Epistle of James, which had been questioned by Luther. The council also agreed that the church's ancient traditions held equal weight to the Bible's teachings, contradicting Luther's view that the Bible should be the sole source of religious authority, not church practices or traditions.

A key issue addressed was the Protestant belief in human sinfulness and lack of free will, with salvation seen as a gift of grace from God, beyond human control. Protestants held that people could not earn salvation without this divine grace. However, the Council of Trent declared that humans have the ability to perform some good works on their own and must be open to receiving God's grace to fulfill His laws. Rejection of grace, they asserted, would result in the loss of salvation.

The council also reaffirmed the existence

of seven sacraments: communion, baptism, confirmation, penance, anointing of the sick, marriage, and holy orders, a doctrine upheld since the 12th century but rejected by most Protestants, except for baptism and communion. The session was halted in 1547 due to poor attendance, a typhus outbreak, and a challenging climate.

The second session occurred in 1551 and 1552 under Pope Julius III, who affirmed that Christ is physically present in communion, opposing the Protestant belief that His presence is symbolic. Pope Paul IV, who succeeded Julius III, saw the council as a challenge to papal authority and initiated his own reforms. In 1555, he reinforced the Roman Inquisition and established the Jewish ghetto in Rome, requiring Jews to wear an identifying badge. In 1559, he introduced the first edition of his Index of Prohibited Books.

### Borromeo

By the late 1500s, influenced by the Council of Trent, reform-minded bishops emerged in northern Italy, with Carlo Borromeo (1538–1584) being one of the most prominent. Born into wealth, he studied law at the University of Padua and became a cardinal after his uncle, Pope Pius IV, was elected. Borromeo played a crucial role in the third session of the Council of Trent and was tasked with implementing its reforms, such as improving religious education and simplifying church rituals.

After being ordained in 1563 and appointed archbishop of Milan, Borromeo moved there following his uncle's death and enacted strict religious reforms. Despite facing resistance and an assassination attempt, he continued to guide Milan's church, particularly during the plague of 1576. His efforts in religious education were key in countering Protestantism in the city. He passed away in 1584 and was canonised in 1610.

### 1.3.3.4 Religious Orders and Congregations Formed

During the Catholic Reformation, numerous new religious orders and congregations were established across Europe, particularly in Italy and France. A significant number of these were known as clerics regular, a term reflecting their adherence to a rule (*regula*) while living in community. Members of these groups took the traditional vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience but did not live in seclusion within monasteries and convents. Instead, they focused on active service in parishes and schools. Additionally, other groups, called congregations, shared similar goals with religious orders, but their members did not take formal vows. These groups, led by bishops and priests, operated within parishes but were not formally affiliated with the Catholic Church.

#### Orders and Congregations for Men

Several notable new religious orders for men emerged during this period, including the Jesuits, Theatines, Barnabites, and Piarists. Among them, the Jesuits were the largest and most influential. Founded in Italy, many of their leaders were Spanish, and most of their members served outside Italy. The Theatines, Barnabites, and Piarists were smaller, mainly Italian orders. The Oratorians, although technically a congregation, resembled a religious order through their French branches.

#### The Theatines

Founded in 1524 by four members of the Roman confraternity of the Order of Divine Love, the Theatines were led by figures such as Cajetan of Thiene, Gian Pietro Carafa (later Pope Paul IV), and others. Initially, their mission focused on forming communities of devout and morally disciplined priests dedicated to preaching, confessions, and spiritual guidance. Unlike other orders, they

didn't beg for funds but relied on stipends from their ministries and voluntary donations. Initially, the Theatines lacked an official set of rules, relying on a letter from Carafa until 1603, when their constitutions were formalised. They expanded from Rome to various parts of Italy and later to Austria, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and Poland, with many bishops emerging from their ranks.

#### The Barnabites

Founded by Antonio Maria Zaccaria in 1530, the Barnabites were a clerical community that combined the duties of priests with a monastic lifestyle. Zaccaria, influenced by the Dominican Battista Carioni da Cremona, faced challenges from the Inquisition due to their unconventional practices, such as public penances and unorthodox begging for donations. Despite facing accusations of heresy, Zaccaria defended his followers, and although they were not formally declared innocent, they gained papal approval. In 1533, the Barnabites were placed under church jurisdiction, and in 1551, they adopted new constitutions, which were approved by Pope Julius III. Both the Theatines and Barnabites played important roles in the religious and social reforms of their time, despite facing opposition and challenges.

### 1.3.3.5 The Jesuits

The Jesuits, also known as the Society of Jesus, were founded by Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556), a Spanish noble from the Basque region. Initially named Iñigo de Oñaz y Loyola, he adopted the name Ignatius around 1537, inspired by Saint Ignatius of Antioch, a martyr. Ignatius started as a soldier, but after being wounded in 1521 during the Italian Wars, he experienced a spiritual transformation. During his recovery, he committed to ascetic practices, including fasting, walking barefoot in winter, and

wearing a hair shirt, which weakened him physically and led to lasting health issues.

Ignatius spent considerable time in Manresa, Spain, engaging in prayer and almsgiving. He gave away all his possessions and dedicated himself to caring for the poor. Despite his noble status, he avoided the luxuries of the elite, choosing humble accommodations. He also sought to confess and repent for his past sins, eventually writing down his reflections, which led to the creation of his influential work, *Spiritual Exercises*, published in 1548. This book outlined a 30-day spiritual regimen emphasising prayer and self-discipline.

In 1524, after a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Ignatius realised he needed formal education to further his mission. He studied Latin in Barcelona and later attended universities in Alcalá de Henares and Salamanca, facing suspicion from Catholic authorities, who suspected him of supporting Protestant reforms. Though he was imprisoned several times, he was always released without charge.

In 1528, Ignatius moved to the University of Paris, where he met key figures who would later join the Jesuit order, including Diego Laínez and Francis Xavier. Ignatius was ordained in 1537 and, with his companions, sought papal approval for a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Due to Turkish pirates, they were unable to make the journey, leading Ignatius to conclude their future work lay elsewhere.

In Italy, Ignatius saw an opportunity to address local religious and social issues, and invited his companions to join him in Rome to establish a new religious order. Unlike traditional monastic orders, the Jesuits pledged loyalty to the Pope, avoided monastic routines, and emphasised strict obedience. Despite initial opposition from some Roman clergy, Pope Paul III formally recognised the Society of Jesus in 1540, marking the beginning of the Jesuits as a major force in

the Catholic Church.

### **Jesuits- an Influential Order**

In 1541, Ignatius Loyola became the first superior general of the Jesuits, an order that rapidly grew from six members to over a thousand. Jesuits played significant roles in the Catholic Reformation, including at the Council of Trent, and engaged in missionary work across the world, including the New World and Poland. They pioneered education, establishing colleges in Europe and India, forming the foundation of the Jesuit educational system. Ignatius worked closely with the papacy, improving conditions in Rome, and founded Saint Martha's, a refuge for women. Despite deteriorating health, he continued his efforts until his death in 1556. Ignatius was canonised in 1622, by which time the Jesuits had become a major force in the Catholic Church.

The Piarists, founded by José Calasanz in 1597, focused on providing free education to poor children, especially in Italy. Unlike the Jesuits, the Piarists did not require students to know Latin and taught practical subjects alongside religious teachings. The order quickly grew, and in 1621, they were formally approved by Pope Gregory XV. Calasanz emphasised education as their primary mission, introducing a unique fourth vow of teaching. However, the order faced challenges with rapid expansion, funding issues, and tensions between priests and lay brothers. Despite opposition from the Jesuits and nobles, the Piarists continued their educational mission and were officially recognised as a full order in 1669.

### **1.3.3.6 Oratorian**

The Oratorian congregation was established by the Italian reformer Philip Neri (1515–1595) in Rome. Born in Florence, Philip sought a more spiritual life after leaving a business apprenticeship. In

Rome, he studied philosophy and theology, and formed a community of friends who gathered at the church of San Girolamo for prayer and discussions. Philip's informal gatherings, held in his room known as the "Oratory," focused on Scripture readings, hymns, and prayers. This led to the creation of the "oratorio," a musical form developed by Giovanni Palestrina. Although initially opposed by Popes Paul IV and Pius V, Philip's movement grew, and in 1575, Pope Gregory XIII approved the Congregation of the Oratory, known as the Oratorians. Philip, known as the "Apostle of Rome," spent his life spreading joy and engaging in religious duties like hearing confessions and celebrating Mass. He died in 1595 and was canonised a saint in 1622.

### 1.3.3.7 Congregation of Missions

Vincent de Paul, a French priest, founded the Congregation of Missions in 1625 to serve the poor and teach them Christianity. Born into a peasant family, he worked with galley slaves and peasants to improve their living conditions. Vincent also established charitable associations, hospitals, and worked as a mediator in France's religious conflicts. Alongside Louise de Marillac, he founded the Sisters of Charity, the first religious order of women focused on charity outside the cloister. Canonised in 1737, his legacy of charity lives on through his organisations.

Between the 15th and 17th centuries, the role of women in religious life evolved. Initially confined to convents, women were increasingly encouraged to engage in charitable work. The Council of Trent mandated cloistered communities for women, but many continued to serve their local communities, especially as educators. Notable figures include Angela Merici, who founded the Ursulines in 1535, focused on education, and Mary Ward, who established schools for girls across Europe.

In France, Louise de Marillac co-founded the Sisters of Charity, focusing on teaching and hospital work, while women like Teresa of Ávila and John of the Cross played influential roles in reforming religious orders, emphasising a balance of spiritual devotion and active engagement in the world. These developments marked a shift from seclusion to active participation for women in education, charity, and spiritual guidance.

### 1.3.3.8 The Inquisitions

The Inquisitions, a notable part of the Catholic Reformation, are often remembered for their brutal methods of identifying and punishing heretics across Europe. While most people view the Inquisition as one entity, it was actually made up of three distinct courts: the Roman, Spanish, and Portuguese Inquisitions. These were all extensions of the medieval Inquisition, which emerged in the 13th century. Though the Inquisitions were responsible for widespread fear and terror in the 16th and 17th centuries, historians suggest that many of the widely believed details, such as the number of executions and the frequency of torture, are exaggerated. For example, in Italy and Portugal, fewer people were executed, and torture was less common than commonly assumed. The most severe methods were employed by Tomás de Torquemada, head of the Spanish Inquisition, although even under his leadership, mass executions were not as widespread as often thought. Nonetheless, the Inquisition remains a dark chapter in European history, where the church's power was used to persecute people, both Christian and non-Christian.

The Roman Inquisition gained traction in 1542 under Pope Paul III, primarily to curb the spread of Protestantism in Italy. However, the Spanish Inquisition had already been established in 1478 and was operating for over six decades by then. Some scholars believe the Roman Inquisition was a response to the cruelty of the Spanish Inquisition,

particularly since much of Italy was under Spanish rule at that time. Although Pope Paul III set up the Roman Inquisition, it wasn't until his successors, Julius III, Paul IV, and Pius V, that it gained significant power. Pope Paul IV was known for his extreme actions, such as creating the Jewish ghetto in Rome and introducing the first Index of Prohibited Books. Pius V, while less brutal, continued to suppress heresy and enforce strict church laws.

### 1.3.3.9 Witchcraft Trials

During the Reformation, both Catholics and Protestants conducted witchcraft trials across Europe to punish those accused of heresy, practicing harmful magic, or devil worship. Magic was believed to cause illness, misfortune, or death, and witches were thought to participate in secret devil-worship ceremonies. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (1487) played a key role in the witch hunts, detailing methods for detecting and executing witches, and advocating for torture to obtain confessions. Witch hunts peaked between 1580 and 1660, largely driven by religious and political beliefs, with most of the accused being women, especially midwives or healers. The trials began to decline in the late 17th century due to concerns about their societal impact and the rise of rational thinking during the Enlightenment. Despite opposition, witch hunts officially ended in Switzerland in 1782. The trials, rooted in superstition, led to the deaths of tens of thousands of innocent people.

### 1.3.4 Legacy

The Counter-Reformation left a lasting legacy comparable to that of Protestantism. For devout Catholics, its most significant achievement was preserving and revitalising the faith, ensuring Catholicism's continued global influence. Beyond religion, the

movement contributed to increased literacy in Catholic regions through Jesuit educational efforts and fostered a renewed emphasis on charitable works. Spiritual leaders like St. Francis de Sales (1567–1622) and St. Vincent de Paul (1576–1660) encouraged almsgiving, leading to the widespread establishment of orphanages and charitable institutions across Catholic Europe.

In terms of women's roles and intellectual history, the Counter-Reformation had mixed effects. While Protestantism promoted female literacy to encourage Bible reading, Catholicism maintained a more traditional stance, limiting women's religious participation. However, it also provided opportunities for a female religious elite, as seen in the mystical writings of St. Teresa of Avila (1515–1582) and the founding of new convents such as the Ursulines and the Sisters of Charity. Though women remained subordinate in both traditions, Catholicism allowed some to pursue independent spiritual callings.

Unfortunately, the Counter-Reformation did not champion the tolerant Christianity envisioned by Erasmus. Christian humanists fell out of favour, and Erasmus's works were swiftly placed on the Index of Prohibited Books. However, while both Catholics and Protestants exhibited religious intolerance, Protestant theology was often more hostile to reason and rational inquiry. By returning to the scholasticism of St. Thomas Aquinas, Counter-Reformation theologians maintained a greater respect for human reason than their Protestant counterparts, who emphasised scriptural authority and faith alone. This intellectual legacy may have influenced the seventeenth-century Scientific Revolution. It is perhaps no coincidence that René Descartes, a key figure in the rise of modern science and the author of the famous phrase "*I think, therefore I am,*" was educated by the Jesuits.



## Recap

- ◆ The Reformation was a major religious and political movement that fragmented the Catholic Church and led to the rise of Protestant denominations
- ◆ The Catholic Church had significant control over Europe, but corruption and inefficiency weakened its authority
- ◆ Key reformers included John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, Huldrych Zwingli, and John Calvin
- ◆ Martin Luther's 1517 protest against indulgences sparked widespread religious reform, leading to Protestantism's spread
- ◆ The printing press played a crucial role in spreading Protestant ideas, making the Bible more accessible
- ◆ Protestantism developed different branches, including Lutheranism, Calvinism, Zwinglianism, and Anabaptism
- ◆ The Reformation in England was politically motivated, initiated by King Henry VIII's break with Rome
- ◆ The movement had profound political impacts, fostering nationalism and weakening the Catholic Church's power
- ◆ Socially, it reshaped religious practices, family life, and education, with Protestantism promoting literacy
- ◆ The Reformation is linked to the rise of capitalism, as argued by scholars like Max Weber
- ◆ The Catholic Church responded with the Counter-Reformation to reform itself and resist Protestant expansion
- ◆ The Council of Trent (1545–1563) clarified Catholic doctrine and reassured Church traditions
- ◆ New religious orders, such as the Jesuits, played a major role in revitalising Catholicism
- ◆ The Inquisitions sought to combat heresy, with the Spanish and Roman Inquisitions being the most prominent
- ◆ Witch-hunts peaked in the 16th and 17th centuries, largely driven by religious fear and superstition

## Objective Questions

1. Who is considered the leader of the Protestant Reformation?
2. Which invention played a crucial role in spreading Reformation ideas?
3. Which religious order was founded by Ignatius Loyola during the Counter-Reformation?
4. Which Catholic doctrines were reaffirmed by the Council of Trent?
5. Which English monarch broke away from the Catholic Church and formed the Church of England?
6. Which reformer is associated with the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland?
7. Who was burned at the stake for their calls for church reform in Florence?
8. Which book by Max Weber linked Protestantism with the rise of capitalism?
9. Which event marked the formal split between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches?
10. Which Protestant reformer believed in predestination?
11. Which reformer first translated the Bible into English?
12. Who was executed for opposing the English Reformation?

## Answers

1. Martin Luther
2. Printing Press
3. Jesuits
4. The supremacy of the Pope
5. Henry VIII



6. John Knox
7. Girolamo Savonarola
8. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
9. The Great Schism of 1054
10. John Calvin
11. John Wycliffe
12. Thomas More

## Assignments

1. Explain the factors that led to the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century.
2. Discuss the role of Martin Luther in the Reformation and the impact of his ideas on Christianity.
3. Compare and contrast the religious beliefs and practices of Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anabaptism.
4. How did the invention of the printing press contribute to the spread of Protestant ideas?
5. Analyse the economic and political impact of the Reformation on European society.

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# Martin Luther and John Calvin

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ examine the practices of Roman Catholic Church and Papacy of the sixteenth century
- ♦ explain the role of Martin Luther and John Calvin in the Protestant Reformation
- ♦ examine the causes of the Lutheran Reformation in Germany
- ♦ explain the spread and impact of Calvinism in Europe

### Prerequisites

The rise of Martin Luther and John Calvin marked a transformative period in European history, reshaping religious, social, and political structures. Luther, a German monk, initiated the Protestant Reformation by challenging the Roman Catholic Church's authority, particularly its practice of selling indulgences. His doctrine of "justification by faith alone" and emphasis on scripture as the highest religious authority led to widespread support in Germany. Meanwhile, John Calvin, a French theologian, developed a systematic Protestant theology centered on predestination and God's absolute sovereignty. His reforms in Geneva established a strict theocratic society, influencing the spread of Calvinism across Europe. This unit explores the causes and consequences of the Reformation, highlighting how religious ideas reshaped political landscapes, social norms, and personal beliefs.

# Keywords

Martin Luther, Lutheran Reformation, Papacy, Protestant, John Calvin, Superstition, Indulgences, Old Testament, Calvinism

## Discussion

### 1.4.1 Martin Luther (1483-1546 CE)

While Portugal and Spain were exploring new maritime routes, Martin Luther, a German monk, was forging a revolutionary path in religious thought. His theological discoveries, made in the solitude of a monastic cell, had profound consequences, rapidly altering the religious landscape of Europe. By challenging the Roman Church, Luther ignited a chain reaction that led to the secession of much of Northern Europe from Catholicism, reshaping religious practices for millions.

The causes of the Lutheran Reformation in Germany can be understood through three questions: why Luther himself broke with Rome, why the German people embraced his teachings, and why German princes supported the movement. Luther's central theological breakthrough - justification by faith alone - was the core reason for his break from the Church. The German masses, meanwhile, were driven by a wave of religious nationalism, while many ruling princes saw Lutheranism as a means to consolidate political power and assert sovereignty over their territories. Though preachers, populace, and princes united under the Lutheran faith, they each arrived at it for different reasons.

While abuses in the Catholic Church - such as superstition, fraud, and the sale of salvation - were widely condemned, Luther's

rebellion was not solely driven by disgust over these practices. Religious superstition was rampant, with people believing in the magical properties of relics and miraculous cures attributed to saints. The trade in relics flourished, with figures like Luther's patron, Elector Frederick the Wise, amassing vast collections that allegedly contained everything from fragments of the Holy Cross to remnants of Moses' burning bush. Such practices underscored the corruption that Luther sought to challenge, but his movement was ultimately fuelled by deeper theological convictions rather than mere outrage at Church abuses.

Superstitions and credulity were deeply troubling to religious idealists like Martin Luther, but even more disturbing were the Church's practices of selling spiritual benefits for money. Dispensations for marriages between close relatives and annulments were granted in exchange for fees. The most egregious practice, however, was the sale of indulgences - pardons reducing time in purgatory. Originally granted for extraordinary deeds like participation in the Crusades, indulgences evolved into a means of raising money for various Church projects. By 1476, Pope Sixtus IV extended their benefits to souls already in purgatory, implying that financial contributions could spare loved ones from suffering.

Luther was appalled by such practices, but his rejection of the Catholic Church went beyond its abuses - he opposed its

entire theological framework. Unlike Christian humanists who sought reform while remaining within the Church, Luther denounced what he saw as a “religion of works.” He rejected the medieval Thomistic belief that humans could contribute to their salvation through good deeds and sacraments administered by priests. Instead, he embraced a more Augustinian view of predestination, asserting that salvation was determined solely by God’s grace, independent of human merit.

Luther’s theological breakthrough stemmed from a personal spiritual crisis. Raised by a father who hoped he would become a lawyer, Luther instead became a monk in 1505, defying family expectations. He zealously followed traditional religious practices - fasting, praying, and frequent confession - but remained tormented by the fear that his efforts could never satisfy God. His moment of revelation came in 1513, when he realised that salvation was not earned through deeds but granted through faith alone, an insight that set him on the path to the Reformation.

Luther’s key theological breakthrough revolved around his understanding of God’s justice. For years, he struggled with the idea that God issued commands that humans could not fully obey, only to punish them with eternal damnation. However, while studying the Psalms as a professor at the University of Wittenberg, he realised that God’s justice was not about punishment but about mercy - saving sinners through faith. This revelation, known as his “tower experience,” made him feel as though he had been “born again.”

Building on this insight, Luther found further confirmation in St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, where he formulated his doctrine of “justification by faith alone.” He concluded that salvation was not earned through good works or religious rituals but was a free gift from God, received through

faith. While faith naturally led to good works, it was faith- not deeds - that determined salvation. This view, though rooted in St. Augustine’s predestination teachings, directly challenged the Catholic Church’s emphasis on sacraments and clerical authority.

Initially, Luther remained within the academic sphere, but in 1517, he was provoked into action by the sale of indulgences. Archbishop Albert of Mainz had entered into heavy debt to secure multiple bishoprics and arranged with Pope Leo X to sell indulgences, using the proceeds partly to repay his debts and partly to fund St. Peter’s Basilica. The Dominican friar Tetzel aggressively marketed these indulgences across northern Germany, implying that purchasing them could instantly secure salvation. Outraged, Luther drafted ninety-five theses criticising indulgences and, on October 31, 1517, posted them on the Wittenberg Castle Church door. Though intended for academic debate, someone translated and widely published them, catapulting Luther into public controversy.

When challenged to recant, Luther refused, intensifying his criticism of Church authority. By 1519, he openly declared that the Pope and clergy were fallible and that Scripture alone was the highest authority. The Pope responded by branding him a heretic, forcing Luther to break with the Catholic Church completely.

Luther’s most productive year came in 1520, when he wrote three influential pamphlets defining his theological vision. These works outlined three key principles: justification by faith, the primacy of Scripture over Church tradition, and the “priesthood of all believers” - the idea that all Christians, not just clergy, had direct access to God. These doctrines laid the foundation for the Lutheran faith and reshaped Christianity in Europe.

Luther’s rejection of traditional Catholic

practices stemmed from his belief that works held no intrinsic value for salvation. He dismissed formal religious rituals such as fasting, pilgrimages, and relic veneration. More fundamentally, he denied that sacraments had any supernatural power, recognising only baptism and the Eucharist (though he initially included penance). He believed Christ was present in the Eucharist but argued that faith, not the sacrament itself, was essential for spiritual benefit. To make worship more accessible, he advocated for services in German instead of Latin and redefined clergy as “ministers” rather than priests, rejecting ecclesiastical hierarchy and monasticism. He also supported clerical marriage and married himself in 1525.

Luther’s revolutionary ideas spread rapidly due to the printing press, igniting widespread support in Germany. His movement was fuelled by national resentment against Rome’s interference in local religious affairs and financial exploitation of German territories. The papacy had lost its spiritual credibility, with successive Popes indulging in corruption and extravagance. Anti-papal sentiments were further intensified by reformist critics and Christian humanists like Erasmus, whose satirical works exposed the moral decay of the Church. Universities, emerging across Germany, also became centers of reformist thought, rallying educated youth to Luther’s cause.

Luther’s defiance escalated in 1520 when he burned the papal decree ordering his recantation, openly challenging Church authority. In 1521, he was summoned before the Diet of Worms, where he refused to recant, prompting his excommunication. Elector Frederick the Wise protected him by staging a “kidnapping” and hiding him in Wartburg Castle. Despite the imperial edict condemning him, Charles V’s preoccupation with foreign wars allowed Lutheranism to take root. By 1530, several German princes had formally

embraced Lutheranism, establishing it within their territories.

The support of German princes was crucial to the survival of Lutheranism. While religious conviction played a role, their primary motivation was political sovereignty. By adopting Lutheranism, they could stop sending financial tributes to Rome, seize Church wealth, and assert control over religious affairs. Unlike France and Spain, where concordats with the papacy granted rulers some ecclesiastical authority, German princes lacked such privileges and saw Lutheranism as a means to gain power.

Once protected by the princes, Luther aligned himself with political authority, advocating absolute obedience to rulers. He strongly opposed the Peasants’ Revolt of 1525, condemning it in his pamphlet *Against the Thievish, Murderous Hordes of Peasants* and urging brutal suppression. The crushing of the revolt cemented Lutheranism’s alliance with state power, ensuring social stability and eliminating future lower-class uprisings.

In his later years, Luther focused on theological debates, spiritual guidance, and prolific writing. Until his death in 1546, he remained steadfast in his beliefs, leaving behind a movement that permanently reshaped Christianity and European politics.

#### 1.4.2 John Calvin (1509-1564 CE)

John Calvin, a 26-year-old French Protestant, fled to Basel to escape persecution and, in 1536, published the first edition of *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. This work became the most influential systematic formulation of Protestant theology. Born in Noyon, France, Calvin originally studied law and the classics, benefiting from Church support. However, he experienced a religious awakening that led him to embrace Protestantism. Unlike Martin Luther, who responded to theological issues as they arose,

Calvin took a structured and methodical approach, creating a comprehensive theological system. His final edition of *Institutes* (1559) became the definitive Protestant doctrinal statement, comparable to Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica* for Catholicism.

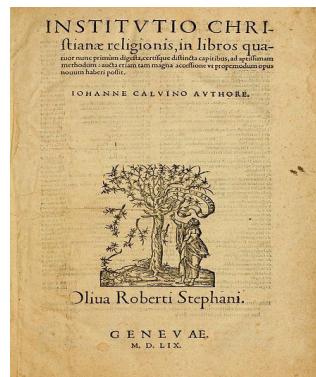


Fig 1.4.1

*The title page from the final edition of Calvin's Magnus opus "Institute of Christian Religion" which summarises his theology.*

Calvin's theology emphasised God's absolute power and the doctrine of predestination: humanity, tainted by original sin, was divided into the elect, destined for salvation, and the damned, condemned to hell. Human actions could not alter divine fate, but the elect would naturally demonstrate piety and moral conduct. Public worship and righteous living were seen as signs of divine favour, reinforcing an active Christian life devoted to God's glory rather than personal salvation.

Although Calvin acknowledged Luther's influence, his teachings differed significantly. Luther advocated passive endurance of worldly suffering, while Calvin encouraged active labor for God's purposes. Calvin also imposed stricter moral and religious discipline, reviving the Old Testament-style Sabbath and rejecting rituals, church hierarchy, and traditional symbols like vestments and stained glass. His vision led to a stark, minimalist form of worship centered solely on scripture and preaching.

Calvin was determined to implement his teachings in practice. Seeing an opportunity in Geneva, a French-speaking Swiss city undergoing political and religious turmoil, he moved there in 1536 and began preaching and organising. However, his reforms led to his expulsion in 1538. He returned in 1541 and soon established control over both the city's government and religious life, turning Geneva into a theocratic state.

The city's government was overseen by a *Consistory* - a council of twelve lay elders and five ministers - which enforced strict moral discipline. Calvin, though not always its official leader, heavily influenced its decisions. The Consistory monitored private behaviour, conducting unannounced household inspections and imposing severe restrictions on personal activities. Dancing, card games, theater, and even working or playing on the Sabbath were banned. Harsh punishments were enforced for crimes ranging from murder and treason to blasphemy, adultery, and heresy. Between 1541 and 1545, Geneva, with a population of 16,000, saw only 38 executions.

Despite its strictness, Geneva became a model of rigorous Protestant reform. John Knox, who introduced Calvinism to Scotland, called it "the most perfect school of Christ since the days of the Apostles." The city attracted religious refugees and students, many of whom became Calvinist missionaries. Calvin actively promoted the spread of his teachings beyond Geneva, sending missionaries and propaganda into Catholic territories. By the mid-16th century, Calvinism had taken root across Europe: it dominated Scotland (Presbyterians), became the majority faith in Holland (Dutch Reformed Church), and formed significant minorities in France (Huguenots) and England (Puritans). However, as Calvinism spread, Catholic opposition intensified, leading to prolonged religious conflicts that would divide Christendom for decades.

## Recap

- ◆ Martin Luther led the Protestant Reformation, challenging Catholic Church corruption
- ◆ Justification by faith alone became Luther's core theological breakthrough
- ◆ Indulgences' sale provoked Luther to write his Ninety-Five Theses
- ◆ Luther rejected sacraments, monasticism, and clerical hierarchy in Christianity
- ◆ Printing press helped spread Lutheranism across Germany, fueling religious change
- ◆ German princes supported Lutheranism to assert political and financial independence
- ◆ John Calvin emphasised predestination and strict moral discipline in Geneva
- ◆ Calvin's "Institutes of Christian Religion" systematically outlined Protestant theology
- ◆ Geneva became a strict theocratic state under Calvin's religious reforms
- ◆ Calvinism spread across Europe, influencing Puritans, Huguenots, and Presbyterian movements

## Objective Questions

1. Who was the leader of the Protestant Reformation in Germany?
2. Who came to Germany for the purpose of selling indulgences?
3. Which practice of the Catholic Church particularly angered Martin Luther and led to the 95 Theses?
4. In which year did Martin Luther post his 95 Theses on the door of Wittenberg Castle Church?
5. What did Martin Luther believe was the ultimate religious authority?
6. Which German prince played a key role in protecting Martin Luther after the Diet of Worms?

7. Where did John Calvin establish a strict theocratic rule?
8. What was the title of John Calvin's major theological work?
9. Which document did Martin Luther publish in response to the sale of indulgences?
10. Which Protestant reformer introduced Calvinism to Scotland?

## Answers

1. Martin Luther
2. John Tetzel
3. Selling of indulgences
4. 1517
5. The Bible
6. Elector Frederick the Wise
7. Geneva
8. Institutes of the Christian Religion
9. Ninety Five Theses
10. John Knox

## Assignments

1. How did Martin Luther and John Calvin differ in their approach to Protestant Reformation? Provide examples of their theological and practical differences.
2. What were the key factors that led to Martin Luther's break with the Roman Catholic Church? Discuss both theological and socio-political reasons.

3. Discuss John Calvin's governance in Geneva. What measures did he implement to enforce religious discipline, and how did they shape Geneva's society?
4. Examine why German princes support Lutheranism? Analyse their motivations and the political implications of their support.
5. Discuss how the spread of Calvinism and Lutheranism lead to religious conflicts in Europe? Provide examples of major conflicts that arose due to the Reformation.

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# Rise of Nation States

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to :

- ◆ explain the historical development of nation-states in England and France
- ◆ discuss the decline of feudalism and its role in shaping modern European states
- ◆ examine the role of the Renaissance and Reformation in fostering national consciousness
- ◆ describe the significance of the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia

### Prerequisites

The formation of the nation-states was driven by significant historical transformations in Europe. The decline of feudalism, the weakening authority of the Church, and the rise of a bourgeois class created conditions for centralised power under monarchs. Feudalism had fragmented Europe into small, self-sufficient territories ruled by local lords, with no sense of national unity. However, economic expansion, urbanisation, and the growth of trade strengthened the need for centralised governance. Monarchs, supported by the middle class, established strong states by consolidating power, forming professional armies, and creating administrative institutions. The Renaissance and Reformation further fuelled the rise of national consciousness by promoting vernacular languages and challenging the Church's authority. The emergence of capitalism also played a crucial role, as economic integration required unified markets under a central authority. The nation-state thus became the primary political structure, ensuring stability, economic progress, and cultural unity. This unit highlights the historical process of nation-state formation in England and France, emphasising the role of political centralisation, economic modernisation, and cultural integration in shaping modern nationalism.



## Keywords

Nation States, Middle Ages, Feudalism, Monarch, Capitalism, Edict of Nantes, Thirty Years War

## Discussion

Before the 1500s, the idea of nations or national identities did not exist. However, by the fifteenth century, the collapse of Feudalism, the diminishing authority of the Church, and the rise of a bourgeoisie class paved the way for powerful monarchs to emerge. This shift led to the formation of European nation states, where the monarch or king became the supreme authority. A nation, typically based on shared economic life, language, culture, and territory, is considered a historical community. The emergence of nation states, alongside geographical discoveries and new trade routes, transformed Europe's political landscape.

### 1.5.1 Nationalism

Nationalism, a modern phenomenon, arose with the development of capitalism. It is both an ideological and political principle that emerged during the formation of nations. A nation generally comes into existence through the overcoming of feudal disunity and the growth of a capitalist production system, which strengthens economic connections between regions and unites local markets into a national economy. When a nation evolves into a state, the nation state is born. The nation-state is the fundamental political organisation of the modern era, replacing the political structures of the Middle Ages.

The decline of feudalism created the material conditions necessary for the rise of nationalism and nation states in Europe. The feudal political structure had not allowed for

any sense of shared nationality. In medieval times, people who spoke the same language and shared the same culture were often spread across different feudal states. For instance, the Holy Roman Empire, which included Germans as its main people, was also home to several linguistic and ethnic groups. Furthermore, the kings of states, who could have been the 'natural' leaders of their nations, often had little power. Medieval kings, lacking a state army, were entirely reliant on the feudal lords for military, administrative, and judicial support. The Catholic Church, as the dominant force influencing people, also acted as a significant barrier to the development of national consciousness.

However, the economic transformation that gained momentum in the late Middle Ages began to create favourable conditions for the formation of nations in Europe. The growth of trade and urban life, coupled with the rise of an assertive middle class, played a pivotal role in this development. Merchants and other emerging economic classes, who found feudal demands and disorder harmful to their interests, supported strong central authority. Thus, the middle class aimed to strengthen monarchs over feudal lords by financing them to build their own armies and administrative systems. With this support, European kings began to assert their supremacy over the feudal lords. The process of weakening the power of feudal lords was underway. The introduction of gunpowder

in Europe during this period greatly aided this process, as the once-impenetrable feudal castles and fortresses were no match for the firearms used by the kings. This created favourable political conditions for the rise of powerful national monarchies.

The Renaissance and Reformation provided strong ideological support for nationalism and the formation of nation states. The rise of national languages and literature, promoted by Renaissance writers, was a key factor in this. It is notable that Machiavelli, a prominent political thinker of the Renaissance, was an advocate for strong monarchical states. The fact that the Reformation involved national and political issues is an established historical reality. In this new economic and social context, the political process of nation and nation state formation became widespread across Europe. People living in defined territories, sharing a common language and culture, began to see themselves as one nation and organised into states under national monarchs. During this period, monarchy was the dominant form of nation state. The first European nation states were England and France. Following them, countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Holland also became nation states during the late Medieval period. However, Italy and Germany only became nation states by 1871.

The current configuration of the world's political map is the result of humanity's continuous political and geographical accommodations and adjustments. A map featuring over 200 states and territories, each divided by boundaries, gives the world the appearance of a jigsaw puzzle. Human territoriality refers to a country's (or even a more localised community's) sense of ownership and attachment to its territory, demonstrated through its resolve to keep it intact and protected.

## 1.5.2 The Thirty Years' War and its Impact on the Nation State

With the Edict of Nantes in 1598, the peace between England and Spain in 1604, and the truce between Spain and Holland in 1609, religious conflicts started to subside and eventually ended in the early 1600s. However, in 1618, a major conflict broke out in Germany, known as the Thirty Years' War, which lasted until 1648. During this period, Spain and France were also involved in the war, while internal tensions in Spain, France, and England led to uprisings and civil unrest in the 1640s. An English preacher in 1643 noted that these were times of widespread upheaval, where disputes about government power were increasingly at the forefront, alongside religious issues.

The Thirty Years' War initially began as a religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants but soon evolved into a broader struggle over German constitutional issues. When a Protestant uprising against the Catholic Habsburg rule in Bohemia occurred in 1618, it triggered a fierce response from Catholic forces. The Habsburgs, led by Ferdinand II, gained the upper hand, seeming on the verge of eradicating Protestantism in Germany. However, when Gustavus Adolphus, the Protestant King of Sweden, entered the war in 1630 to defend Protestantism, he was supported by Catholic France, which feared the growing power of the Habsburgs. Though Gustavus initially achieved success, his death in battle in 1632 led to continued French support for the Swedish forces, and by 1639, France directly entered the war. From that point on, the conflict was primarily between France and Sweden on one side, and Austria and Spain on the other, with Germany as the battleground.

The war devastated Germany, with numerous cities besieged and plundered multiple times. The toll on civilians was catastrophic, as mercenary armies looted towns, while disease and plague spread throughout the region. By the time peace negotiations began in 1648, many parts of Germany had lost over half their population. The Peace of Westphalia, which ended the war, established France as the dominant European power, taking control of large parts of Alsace. The Habsburgs lost significant territories and influence, while the balance of power in the Holy Roman Empire remained largely unchanged. Germany remained divided between Protestant and Catholic states, with little chance of unified action until the 19th century.

The most significant losers of the Thirty Years' War were the Spanish Habsburgs, who, after investing heavily in the conflict, saw their power greatly diminished. Spain's fall from greatness, after decades of dominance, was swift and tragic. By the mid-1600s, Spain had lost control of the Netherlands, and its position as the leading European power was shattered. The war had also seen many armies rely on mercenaries, leading to widespread destruction as soldiers plundered for supplies. The Peace of Westphalia drastically altered the European balance of power. Spain lost its supremacy, France emerged as the leading Western power, Sweden gained control of the Baltic, and the Dutch Republic was recognised as independent. The Holy Roman Empire's member states gained full sovereignty, marking the end of the concept of a unified Catholic empire and the beginning of modern Europe as a community of sovereign states.

The emergence of nation-states can be linked to changes in production methods, particularly the rise of the bourgeoisie. In both Britain and France, the formation of nation-states helped solve problems related

to modernisation. These nation states played a significant role in the social and economic integration of smaller regions, contributing to political and economic unification. This unification allowed peripheral regions to benefit from capitalist modernisation. To foster economic growth, the state needed to establish conditions that supported industrialisation, which required centralised systems and institutions. These states also promoted patriotic fervor by recruiting professional armies and navies, while imposing nationalism, literacy, cultural uniformity, and reforms from above.

The rise of nation states is a modern phenomenon that emerged in the late 18th and 19th centuries, but its origins can be traced back to the pre-modern period. Developments in Britain and France during this process included the consolidation of territories through bureaucratic, absolutist states, the redefinition of borders, the rise of the bourgeoisie, and a transformation in the relationship between rulers and the ruled. The establishment of absolutist states in Britain and France under strong monarchies in the pre-modern era was pivotal in shaping the modern world and resolving many of the issues of late medieval society. These transformed absolutist states laid the foundation for the nation states in Britain and France.

### 1.5.3 Rise of England as a Nation State

The concept of the nation state, as we know it today, evolved from ancient Greece and Rome and lay dormant throughout the Dark Ages until feudalism began to weaken. The Norman Invasion of 1066 marked a significant turning point, as the Normans overthrew the Anglo-Saxon nobility, established a new political order, and linked England more closely to Continental Europe. This event led to the creation of a powerful

English monarchy and set the stage for the long-lasting conflict between England and France. The Magna Carta of 1215, which limited the king's power and established sovereignty based on law, was another foundational moment in the development of England's constitutional law and Parliament.

The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) between England and France further shaped the national identities of both countries, with the war culminating in the expulsion of the English from France. During this time, Europe also saw an economic revival through the Renaissance, leading to a growing middle class and the rise of urban commerce, while the nobility's influence declined. The Catholic Church's power weakened with the Protestant Reformation, and technological advancements from the Scientific Revolution contributed to the emergence of a new Europe.

The Early Modern Period (from the late Middle Ages to the late 1700s) was defined by the rise of science, the formation of nation states, and the economic theory of mercantilism. The Modern Era began around the end of the 18th century and continues to this day.

### **1.5.3.1 Early Nation State Building in England**

Early attempts at nation state building in England were led by English monarchs, particularly those from the Tudor dynasty (1485-1603), who established a centralised government system. Parliament, an institution with a continuous history since 1275, became the key platform for collaboration with the upper classes to support centralisation. England evolved into a political society where the centralised monarchy coexisted with local interests represented by Parliament. In the sixteenth century, England's towns were integrated into a single unit, with internal

barriers eliminated through state economic regulations. This was made possible by the concentration of power in the crown and England's relatively small geographical size. The expansion of urban markets unified the kingdom, with London driving food demand, encouraging agricultural production, commercialisation, and capital investment in the countryside.

The progress of religious reformation also played a key role in nation state creation. The Reformation subordinated the national church to the monarchy and connected villages to towns, reflecting resistance to Papal authority. During Queen Elizabeth's reign, literature, religious sentiment, the rise of new social classes, and changing political ideas all contributed to the emergence of the English nation state. The Anglican Church provided a strong foundation for the state, with clergy promoting obedience and patriotism to the monarchy. Parish clergy men held special services on important dates and reminded families of their duty to obey the king and support the state. However, with the advent of industrialisation, anti-Catholic sentiment and nationalist appeals by the church became less effective.

### **1.5.3.2 The Integration of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland into the British Nation State**

The union of Wales with England in 1536, imposed by Henry VIII, marked an important step in national integration. Under this union, Wales was to send representatives to the English Parliament, and English administrative systems were introduced to control local unrest. Despite this political unification, Wales retained its distinct culture, language, and traditions well into the 19th century. The industrialisation of Wales transformed the largely agrarian region, leading to urbanisation, the development of

industrial centers, and the rise of a working class. This process further integrated Wales into the English state, as commercial activities and education spread.

Scotland, historically hostile to England, remained an independent state until the Act of Union in 1707, which united England and Scotland. Although the union was voluntary, it caused resentment among many Scots, especially due to the way it was forced through. Despite the political union, Scotland maintained distinct institutions, such as its legal and educational systems, and the Presbyterian Church. Over time, the industrial revolution led to the merging of Scotland's economy with England's. The rise of a shared British identity was evident in the Scottish middle class's loyalty to Britain, reflected in terms like "North Britain" and the naming of railways and hotels.

Ireland's union with Britain was marked by political failure and became a contentious issue. By the late 16th century, Ireland was effectively an English colony. Constant uprisings by the Catholic majority against the Anglican landlords led to the sending of troops, and in 1801, Ireland was formally united with England, Scotland, and Wales. However, the union failed for several reasons: limited industrialisation outside of Belfast, the suppression of the Catholic Church, and a lack of a strong middle class. The Irish cultural renaissance in the late 19th century, led by poets, playwrights, and writers, alongside nationalist movements like the Gaelic League and Sinn Fein, eventually led to the partition of Ireland. Northern Ireland remained loyal to Britain, while the rest of Ireland became a republic. The British state discouraged minority languages, yet supported national symbols, such as the Union Jack, which amalgamates English, Scottish, and Irish elements. Each constituent country also maintained its own flag, anthem, and separate participation in international

events.

#### 1.5.4 Rise and Fall of the Spanish Nation State

During the reign of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand, Spain completed the Reconquista in 1492, expelling the last Muslim rulers and establishing Catholicism as the nation's religious foundation. That same year, Isabella funded Columbus's journey across the Atlantic, which ultimately led to Spain's conquest of the Americas.

In 1519, Charles V, the grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, inherited a vast empire. Along with the Spanish crown, he also became the heir to the Austrian Hapsburgs, inheriting the Holy Roman Empire and the Netherlands. A devout Catholic, Charles V sought to suppress the Protestant Reformation in the German states. His main adversary was the Ottoman Empire, which, under the control of the Muslim Turks, occupied much of Hungary and contested Spain's naval dominance in the Mediterranean. In 1555, after years of conflict, Charles V signed the Peace of Augsburg, which ended religious warfare between Catholics and Protestants in the Holy Roman Empire.

Philip II, Charles V's son, dedicated his reign to defending the Catholic Church. In the 1560s, a Protestant uprising in the Netherlands, driven by resentment over Philip's policies - including heavy taxation, authoritarian rule, and the Inquisition - erupted into the Eighty Years' War. This costly war drained the Spanish Empire's resources and manpower.

By the 1580s, Philip saw England's Queen Elizabeth I as his primary Protestant adversary. Elizabeth supported English privateers, known as Sea Dogs, who attacked Spanish galleons laden with treasure. One of the most notorious Sea Dogs, Francis Drake, became a national hero in England

after being knighted by Elizabeth, much to Philip's frustration.

### 1.5.5 Rise of the French Nation State

Between the 1560s and the 1590s, France was devastated by religious wars between the Catholic majority and the Huguenots (French Protestants). In 1589, Henry IV, a Huguenot prince, ascended to the throne. Recognising the need for unity, he converted to Catholicism but secured the rights of Protestants through the Edict of Nantes in 1598. This decree granted religious tolerance to the Huguenots and permitted them to fortify their towns and cities.

By the late 1600s, France had overtaken Spain as the most powerful nation in Europe. The French government operated without a parliamentary check on the king's power, and its economy followed mercantilist policies aimed at strengthening domestic industries. High tariffs were imposed to encourage the population to buy French-made goods, while France's overseas colonies, such as New France in North America, were expanded. Despite being the wealthiest state in Europe, the vast sums of money were insufficient to sustain Louis XIV's extravagant court and numerous wars.

Following the assassination of Henry IV in 1610 by a fanatical monk, his son, Louis XIII, became king. However, it was Cardinal Richelieu, the prime minister, who held most of the power. Richelieu worked to consolidate royal authority by weakening the Huguenots and the nobility, destroying their fortresses and outlawing their private armies.

Louis XIV, known as the "Sun King," inherited the throne in 1643 at the age of five. He did not assume full control until much later, during which time the Fronde uprisings took place. Nobles, merchants, peasants, and

the urban poor rebelled for various reasons, and at one point, Louis and his family were forced to flee from the palace. Nevertheless, Louis XIV strongly believed in the divine right of kings, famously stating, "I am the state," and adopted the Sun as the symbol of his absolute power.

Louis XIV's reign was marked by a relentless quest for prestige and control. He transformed a royal hunting lodge into the lavish Palace of Versailles. The palace housed over 10,000 people, including nobles vying for court privileges. Louis' obsession with power led him to centralise authority in the monarchy, turning once powerful feudal lords into courtiers. As a patron of the arts, he sponsored musicians, painters, and architects, but his desire for dominance and grandeur would eventually have costly consequences for France.

Although initially successful, Louis XIV's wars were ultimately detrimental. With the backing of European powers like the Dutch and the English, coalitions formed to prevent France from dominating the continent, draining the French economy in the process. By the end of his reign in 1715, Louis XIV had led France to become the most powerful nation in Europe, but the country was left with a nearly empty treasury.

In 1685, Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, which led to the exodus of over 100,000 Huguenots. The persecution of the Huguenots, who had been among the most prosperous and industrious subjects of the kingdom, was a disastrous mistake. This loss severely harmed the French economy, similar to the effects of the expulsion of Muslims and Jews in Spain.

#### 1.5.5.1 The State and National Integration in France

From 1830 onwards, France actively worked towards national unification. The

state prioritised integration by expanding communication networks beyond immediate economic needs, emphasising national interest over profit. The trunk road system, initiated under the old regime, was completed by the late 1840s, while the railway network reinforced state power through administrative and military mobility. By the 1880s, an extensive road network facilitated all-weather travel, allowing remote areas to participate in the national economy by World War I.

Economic integration was furthered by the Banque de France, which expanded its branches, boosting local stock exchanges and commerce. Industrial towns became melting pots of diverse regional populations. The army also played a crucial role in national cohesion by mixing soldiers from different areas, exposing them to various customs and landscapes.

The French government fostered national identity through grand celebrations, such as the 14 July holiday (established in 1880), the centenary of the Revolution in 1889,

and major exhibitions like those of 1867 and 1900. These events, featuring military parades, fireworks, and festivities, were replicated in towns and villages across France.

Education played an important role in cultural unification. Schools and church promoted the French language and patriotic values. The widely popular textbook *Le Tour de la France par Deux Enfants* (1877) inspired nationalism among the youth. The state's efforts led to the dominance of the French language over regional dialects, consolidating national identity.

External threats also contributed to unity. The victory at Valmy during the French Revolution and the German invasion in World War I strengthened national solidarity. In the modern era, General de Gaulle emphasised a strong nation-state to counter Soviet military threats and American cultural and economic influence. He advocated for military and economic strength while resisting the 'Anglicisation' of the French language and global Americanisation of culture.

## Recap

- ◆ The decline of feudalism enabled monarchs to establish nation-states
- ◆ Nation State Formation: Shared culture, language, and history unified medieval territories into states
- ◆ Economic transformation fuelled national identity and state consolidation
- ◆ Thirty Years' War: Religious conflicts reshaped Europe, weakening Spain and strengthening France
- ◆ Peace of Westphalia: Redefined European boundaries, cementing sovereign nation states
- ◆ Tudor centralisation and religious reformation strengthened the English state
- ◆ Magna Carta limited monarchy, laying foundations for constitutional governance in England
- ◆ Louis XIV centralised power, transforming France into Europe's dominant state
- ◆ Costly wars and economic mismanagement led to Spain's downfall
- ◆ Wales and Scotland integration into Britain strengthened national unity and administration
- ◆ Mercantilism Strengthened the economies through trade and centralised government support
- ◆ Huguenots' Persecution: France's economic loss due to religious intolerance
- ◆ The Industrial Revolution strengthened national unity through economic and technological progress

## Objective Questions

1. What political and economic system dominated Europe during the medieval period?
2. What created material conditions for the emergence of nation states in Europe?

3. Which event marked the beginning of the formation of the English nation state?
4. What document, signed in 1215, limited the power of the English king?
5. Which war played a significant role in shaping the national identities of England and France?
6. Who was the French ruler who proclaimed “ I Am the state”?
7. Which French king revoked the Edict of Nantes, leading to the persecution of Huguenots?
8. Which Renaissance political thinker advocated for strong monarchical states?
9. Which ruling dynasty played a key role in the centralisation of England during the early nation state formation?
10. Which major conflict devastated Germany and ended with the Treaty of Westphalia?

## Answers

1. Feudalism
2. Decline of feudalism
3. The Norman Invasion of 1066
4. The Magna Carta
5. The Hundred Years’ War
6. Louis XIV
7. Louis XIV
8. Machiavelli
9. The Tudors
10. Thirty Year’ War

## Assignments

1. What were the major factors that led to the rise of nation states in Europe during the late medieval period?
2. How did the Thirty Years' War impact the formation of the modern nation-state?
3. How did the integration of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland contribute to the creation of the British nation-state?
4. How did the reign of Louis XIV contribute to the development of the French nation state?
5. How did the Renaissance and Reformation influence the development of nation states?

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**BLOCK**

# Development of Democracy



# UNIT

## English Civil War

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ understand the causes, nature, and consequences of the English Civil War
- ♦ examine the conflict between the monarchy and the Parliament
- ♦ discuss the role of key figures such as James I, Charles I, Oliver Cromwell, and Parliament in shaping the course of the war and its aftermath
- ♦ explain the broader impact of the English Civil War

### Prerequisites

The English Civil War was a conflict between the monarchy and Parliament over governance and constitutional authority in England, lasting from 1642 to 1649. The tensions originated during the rule of James I, who believed in absolute monarchy and divine right, leading to disputes with Parliament over finances, religious policies, and governance. His successor, Charles I, further strained relations by dissolving Parliament multiple times and imposing unpopular taxes without its consent. Religious conflicts, economic struggles, and intellectual movements like Puritanism and Leveller ideologies fueled opposition. The war saw Parliament, led by figures such as Oliver Cromwell, challenge royal authority, resulting in the formation of the New Model Army. The conflict ended with Charles I's execution in 1649, marking the first time an English monarch was tried and executed by his own people. This unit examines the causes and course of the war, including key battles, ideological movements, the role of Parliament and Cromwell, and the lasting impacts of the Civil War, such as political restructuring and the rise of a Puritan republic.



## Keywords

Tudor, Stuart, Long Parliament, Puritan Revolution, House of Lords, The Puritans, The Levellers, The Diggers, Henrician Reformation

## Discussion

Queen Elizabeth I enjoyed widespread popularity and ruled over a structured and stable society, where social classes were defined by lineage and land ownership. England was predominantly rural, with London as its sole major city, and its rigid hierarchy contributed to societal stability. Elizabeth exercised absolute authority, proclaiming herself the supreme leader in all matters, including religion. To solidify her power, she established Anglicanism as the official state religion, enforcing it through fines, strict laws, and the Court of High Commission. Catholics faced persecution, with some being exiled or executed, while Puritans, though a vocal minority, pushed for reforms in Anglican practices. Elizabeth actively suppressed Puritan influence, prompting many to seek refuge abroad. Despite ongoing religious conflicts, her rule preserved social stability and reinforced the strength of the monarchy.

After Queen Elizabeth's death in 1603, England experienced a smooth dynastic transition from the Tudors to the Stuarts. James I, already the ruler of Scotland, ascended to the English throne as the first Stuart king. James I inherited a kingdom with financial problems, a weak military, and religious conflicts. However, he made little effort to control spending or gain public support. To raise money, he sold noble titles, which angered the aristocracy. His attempts to reduce religious tensions, such as reconnecting with the pope and organising the Hampton Court Conference, only worsened divisions among Anglicans, Puritans, and

Catholics. Although he approved the King James Bible, he failed to understand the depth of religious conflicts and enforced strict rules. Over time, he became more focused on personal pleasures than ruling the country. His favouritism toward young men and disrespectful speeches made him unpopular, earning him the nickname "the wisest fool in Christendom." His poor leadership and lack of social skills weakened his reputation. During the reigns of the first two Stuart kings, James I and Charles I, tensions between the monarchy and Parliament escalated, ultimately leading to the English Civil War, which lasted from 1642 to 1649.

### 2.1.1 Conflict between the King and the Parliament

The conflict between the Monarchy and Parliament began during the reign of James I (1603–1625), as the cooperation that the Tudors had maintained with Parliament gradually weakened. James I strongly believed in absolute monarchy and even wrote a book on the subject, *The True Law of Free Monarchy*. By "free monarchy," he meant a king should rule without interference from Parliament, the Church, or past traditions. He was well-educated and a theological scholar but was also lazy and frivolous. As a Scottish ruler, he struggled to connect with the English people and was mockingly called "the wisest fool in Christendom." He promoted the idea of divine right monarchy and dismissed Parliament as chaotic and disorderly. His relations with Parliament quickly worsened, especially when he claimed they

had no right to discuss foreign policy.



Fig 2.1.1 James I

The first major conflict between James and Parliament emerged with *The Common Apology* of 1604, a document in which the House of Commons asserted that their rights and privileges were inherited and could not be taken away without harming the entire kingdom. Throughout his reign, James convened four parliaments, but each one showed increasing tensions. Parliament's growing distrust of the king's intentions led to continuous conflicts and controversy.

James I was succeeded by his son, Charles I, called Parliament three times in four years during his reign (1625–1649), but each time he dissolved it when financial matters became contentious. Under his rule, the relationship between the monarchy and Parliament completely broke down. Lacking political experience, he made poor financial decisions that increased public dissatisfaction. His first Parliament collapsed in 1625 when he imposed a forced loan on landowners without approval. England was engaged in a disastrous war against Spain with support from France and Denmark, requiring funds that Charles raised without Parliament's consent. When 76 gentlemen refused to pay, he ordered their imprisonment.

Between 1625 and 1629, Charles convened three parliaments but dissolved each when they refused to grant him money. In response

to his actions, Parliament introduced the Petition of Right in 1628, drafted by Sir Thomas Wentworth. This document forced Charles to acknowledge that he could not impose taxes or imprison individuals without just cause. It was a key step in England's constitutional development, affirming Parliament's rights and condemning arbitrary rule. Enraged by this restriction on his power, Charles dissolved Parliament in 1629 and ruled alone for the next 11 years, seeking controversial ways to raise funds without parliamentary approval.

The year 1640 marked a turning point in both Charles I's reign and England's constitutional history. Parliament demanded significant concessions, challenging the Crown's authority and asserting its own powers. They insisted on restoring the rights granted to the Council under the Magna Carta of 1415 and claimed final authority over finances, taxation, and foreign policy. Parliament also sought religious reform and greater local governance, opposed to the royal courts controlled by the nobility. In response, Charles called Parliament again in 1640, known as the Long Parliament. This Parliament aimed to redefine the balance of power, declaring itself the supreme authority. It abolished royal institutions like the Court of Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission and called for the imprisonment of officials seen as loyal to the King, such as William Laud and Wentworth. It also ended the payment of ship money and required parliamentary approval for all taxes. Ship money was a traditional practice in England where coastal towns were required to provide ships for the King's service during wartime, often substituting this obligation with money. Charles I sought to maintain a navy during peacetime and decided that ship money should be paid by the entire country. In 1634, he ordered that this tax be imposed on inland towns as well, without Parliament's consent. The Triennial

Act was passed to ensure Parliament would be convened at least once every three years.

### 2.1.2 The Long Parliament

Charles I's royal policies led to a rebellion in Scotland in 1637 when he attempted to impose the Anglican Book of Common Prayer on the Presbyterian Church. The Scots, already unhappy with the union with England, demanded that Charles allow a church assembly to review the prayer book. Some Scottish leaders signed the National Covenant, condemning the Pope and the prayer book while vowing to protect their religion and freedoms. In response, Charles called the church assembly in Scotland and prepared for a military invasion, prompting the Scots to rise up in rebellion.

The Scottish revolt marked a turning point in Charles's reign. In 1639, the King asked London to help fund the war against the Scots. London agreed but only if Charles reconvened Parliament. In 1640, rebellious Scots took control of the northeastern English port of Newcastle without resistance. Finally, in April 1640, Charles summoned Parliament for the first time in eleven years, but it refused to allocate funds for the war. Charles dissolved Parliament and called for new elections, resulting in the Long Parliament, which sat from 1640 to 1660 without new elections. The Long Parliament used the Scottish rebellion as leverage to push its own demands, including the abolition of the Star Chamber and the High Commission.

### 2.1.3 The English Civil War

The English Civil War was essentially a constitutional struggle over how England should be governed. Parliament's role was to defend fundamental English liberties, grounded in the Magna Carta of 1215. Led by the Puritans, Parliament was not claiming sovereignty but was asserting its traditional role as a counterbalance to the power of the

monarchy. Those who supported Parliament came to be known as "the Country," while supporters of absolute monarchy were associated with "the Court." Titled nobles generally backed King Charles I, while the gentry formed the core opposition to him.

The war is sometimes referred to as the "Puritan Revolution," as Puritans, though not the only group resisting the monarchy, were a significant force. Many Puritans came from the lesser gentry in eastern England, and John Pym (1584-1643), a Puritan and skilled debater, became the leader of Parliament's opposition. Charles I, following his father's philosophy, echoed James I's saying, "No bishops, No King."

After dissolving the "Short Parliament" in 1640, Charles called a new parliament. At the same time, he tried to strengthen the royal army by recruiting Catholic Irish regiments and appointed Wentworth, now the Earl of Strafford, as its commander. Strafford, a former critic, became an advisor and supporter of the King. The English army suffered defeat in Scotland, and Parliament, under Pym's leadership, turned its attention to the King's advisors. As a result, Strafford was tried and executed in London.

In 1641, the Irish revolted, killing many Protestant landlords. In response, Parliament passed the *Grand Remonstrance*, which called for religious and administrative reforms. However, there was division within Parliament over the extent of opposition to royal policies. The Puritans aimed to control the House of Commons and reform both the church and the state, but wealthy nobles feared that such reforms would undermine their power.

In January 1642, Charles attempted a bold coup by bringing armed soldiers into Parliament to arrest Pym and other leaders, but they had already fled to London, where they were protected by artisans and craftsmen.

Support for Parliament grew stronger, and Charles, fearing for his safety, fled north. In June 1642, Parliament issued the “Nineteen Propositions,” condemning the King. By August 1642, Charles had mobilised his forces in Nottingham.

The supporters of the King were known as Cavaliers, representing the traditional feudal fighting forces, while Parliament’s supporters were called Roundheads, named for the caps they wore. The Cavaliers claimed they were fighting for both the King and God, against those disrupting social harmony. The conflict was not only about class but also religious beliefs, foreign policy, and the nature of rebellions in Scotland and Ireland. The war disrupted life far beyond the battlefields due to requisitions, plunder, and hardship.

Parliament’s soldiers, known as “Roundheads” because of their bowl-shaped haircuts, fought a series of four major battles. The first took place on October 23, 1642, at Edgehill, south of Birmingham. Charles set up his headquarters in Oxford, about fifty miles northwest of London. In February 1643, Charles rejected Parliament’s terms for a settlement, and both sides escalated their propaganda campaigns. For the first time in history, the Civil War became a battle of words, with over 22,000 newspapers, pamphlets, broadsides, and sermons published between 1640 and 1661.

Parliament raised funds through heavy taxes on excise and property and confiscated the assets of prominent families supporting the King’s cause. It gained support from the wealthier, more economically advanced regions, and many villages became battlegrounds for religious and political struggles.

### 2.1.3.1 Nature of Civil War

Historians have offered various interpretations of the causes and nature of

the English Revolution, or Civil War. S.R. Gardiner, a prominent Victorian historian, wrote an 18-volume political account of the Civil War in *History of England 1603-1656*. He argued that religion and ideologies were the central forces behind the conflict, presenting it as a Puritan revolution, although this view has faced criticism from Marxist historians.

Marxist scholars, such as E.J. Hobsbawm and Maurice Dobb, see the English Civil War as a revolution aimed at dismantling the feudal system and establishing a capitalist society. They argue that the shift from feudalism to a bourgeois society was a key change during the 17th century.

Other historians, like R.H. Tawney, Trevor-Roper, Lawrence Stone, and Christopher Hill, have provided social interpretations of the English Civil War. Tawney believed that the rise of the gentry in the century before the 1640s was the main cause of the war. H.R. Trevor-Roper criticised Tawney’s view, arguing that the gentry actually experienced a decline, mainly due to inflation in the 16th century. Lawrence Stone, in his work *The Causes of the English Revolution, 1529-1642*, suggested that the English Revolution was driven by a need to restore balance to property ownership, which had been disrupted by land redistribution in the previous century. Christopher Hill linked the origins of the revolution to the socio-economic effects of the Henrician Reformation and considered it a great social movement, akin to the French Revolution of 1789, describing it as a bourgeois revolution.

### 2.1.3.2 Causes of the English Civil War

#### Religion

During the 17th century, the status of Protestantism in England became increasingly unstable due to Spain’s dominance in

the Thirty Years' War and the policies of Archbishop Laud during the reign of Charles I. This religious uncertainty played a crucial role in the decision to summon Parliament after Charles I had ruled personally for eleven years. Many parliamentary leaders were deeply concerned about the Stuart monarchs' pro-Catholic policies. These policies created opportunities for conflict, allowing Parliament to assert itself in royal affairs.

### Taxation

Royal taxation emerged as another major source of contention. The monarchy and the parliamentary class developed conflicting principles to justify their respective positions. The sharp inflation of the sixteenth century exacerbated financial difficulties, prompting the Tudors to explore alternative solutions. The sale of crown land proved insufficient in addressing these challenges, leading the Tudors to reform the tax system through more accurate assessments. Increased customs duties provided some financial relief to the Stuart rulers.

### Economic Regulations Under Charles I

Economic policies implemented by Charles I contributed to mounting tensions. He imposed strict guild regulations on craftsmen and trades, while state-enforced monopolies placed additional burdens on industries. The government imposed harsh conditions on manufacturers, ostensibly to maintain quality standards, further exacerbating economic discontent.

### The Concept of Divine Right

The Stuart monarchs adhered to the belief that their right to rule was divinely ordained and exercised unquestionable prerogative powers. They expected their subjects to provide military and financial support without challenge. However, their practice of imposing taxes without parliamentary

approval was perceived as a direct threat to the security of private property.

### Rise of New Intellectual Movements

As tensions escalated, various intellectual groups composed of Puritan ministers, teachers, professors, and lawyers - found themselves increasingly alienated from government institutions. These groups formulated their own governance models, challenging the authority of the monarchy. Among the most significant movements were the Puritans, Levellers, Diggers, Fifth Monarchy Men, Republicans, and Royalists.

### Puritanism

Puritanism, a socio-political movement, played a critical role in shaping the ideology that fueled the early stages of the civil war. It sought to eradicate corruption and remove Catholic practices such as holy days, kneeling at the altar, and vestments, arguing that these customs were not rooted in the Bible. Initially, Puritanism focused on opposing specific rituals, with public preaching serving as a powerful tool for spreading its message. More than just a religious ideology, Puritanism influenced scientific thought, political democracy, and social egalitarianism. Historians have emphasised the Puritans' significant role in pushing England toward civil war.

### The Levellers

The Levellers represented a radical movement that thrived in London, advocating for democratic principles. Leaders such as John Lilburne and John Wildman developed a revolutionary political agenda, arguing that Parliament should be bound by fundamental laws. They demanded religious liberty for all Protestants and called for a constitution that would ensure political equality by eliminating property-based voting qualifications. Through demonstrations and public rallies, the Levellers sought to mobilise popular

support for their cause.

### The Fifth Monarchy Men

This group of radical religious thinkers actively participated in political experiments during the civil war. They believed in the establishment of a government led by the “saints” and were prepared to use military force to achieve their aims. Their ideology was rooted in the belief that four temporal monarchies had come to an end, and the fifth monarchy - the reign of Christ - was imminent. Many of their members were later appointed to Barebone’s Parliament.

### The Diggers

The Diggers, led by former textile merchant Gerrard Winstanley, formed another radical faction. In his book *The Law of Freedom*, Winstanley envisioned a society devoid of class distinctions, property ownership, or currency, where the community collectively managed the land. The Diggers, often referred to as the “true Levellers,” represented an even lower social base than the Levellers and sought to implement their vision through communal farming.

### The Quakers

The Quakers emerged as a small but influential group during the civil war. Their radical stance directly challenged the authority of the church, making them unique among revolutionary sects. Unlike other groups, the Quakers completely rejected the legitimacy of civil authority. Their ideas had a notable impact on political developments during the conflict.

### 2.1.4 The Emergence of Oliver Cromwell and the New Model Army

Oliver Cromwell, a devout Puritan general, rose to prominence as a key leader during the civil war. Coming from a Yeoman family

that had attained gentry status under the Tudors, he played a central role in defeating and ultimately executing Charles I. Elected to Parliament in 1640, Cromwell underwent a religious transformation, embracing Calvinism and taking command of the parliamentary army.



Fig 2.1.2 Oliver Cromwell

Cromwell actively opposed efforts by Presbyterian members of Parliament to disband the army or establish a Presbyterian Church. He sought a moderate agreement with King Charles, known as *The Heads of the Proposals* (1647), but Charles rejected it. In response, Cromwell created the General Council of the Army and pressured the army into abandoning its proposed settlement, *The Agreement of the People*, which had been heavily influenced by Leveller ideas.

The *New Model Army*, Cromwell’s brainchild, became a powerful military and political force. Unlike Parliament, the army represented a broader social base and championed more democratic ideals. Many soldiers rejected Presbyterianism just as strongly as they opposed the Church of England. Cromwell instilled strict discipline in his troops, ensuring they received regular wages and reinforcing their effectiveness on the battlefield.

## 2.1.5 Divisions within Parliament

Parliament was divided into two main factions: Presbyterians and Independents. Presbyterians, the majority, were moderates. Independents, by contrast, were militant Puritans who sought more radical reforms. They envisioned a decentralised church structure, allowing congregations to select their own ministers, and advocated for broader political changes to safeguard individual rights. Unlike the Presbyterians, the Independents were unwilling to compromise with the king over parliamentary authority. They also opposed the creation of a state-controlled church and supported religious tolerance. Cromwell aligned himself with the Independents and emerged as their leader.

Cromwell proceeded to purge Presbyterian commanders from the New Model Army. The army decisively defeated the Royalists in June 1645, leading to King Charles' surrender to the Scots in 1646. By February 1647, the Scottish army had withdrawn from England, leaving Charles in parliamentary custody. When Charles refused to defend himself, he was found guilty and executed at Whitehall on January 30, 1649 - the first English monarch to be tried and executed by his own subjects.

### 2.1.5.1 Victory of Parliament

Under pressure from the Presbyterians, Parliament attempted to disband sections of the New Model Army without paying the soldiers. However, the army refused to comply and instead established a General Council. Believing that Parliament's actions were part of a conspiracy against

the Independents, several army regiments mutinied and proposed a political platform known as *The Agreement of the People*.

## 2.1.6 The Puritan Republic and the Restoration

Following the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords, England became a Puritan republic. Cromwell brutally suppressed an Irish uprising in 1649 before leading military campaigns in Scotland (1650-1651). He also waged wars against economic rivals, including the Dutch Republic (1652-1654) and Spain (1655-1659). Declaring himself "Lord Protector," Cromwell ruled with near-absolute power.

## 2.1.7 Impacts of Civil War

Approximately 45,000 men participated in this battle, making it the largest confrontation of the English Civil War. As a result, Parliament secured control over northern England. Throughout the conflict, thousands of villages experienced requisitions, widespread plundering, and severe hardships. Around 10 percent of the English population was displaced from their homes due to the ongoing turmoil.

Many regions remained neutral as local leaders struggled to maintain authority and prevent their territories from being engulfed in warfare and destruction. The prolonged conflict plunged England into near anarchy, exacerbating public resentment over the forced billeting of soldiers, severe food shortages, and soaring prices. The war also gave rise to movements that appeared to threaten the established social and political order.

## Recap

- ◆ Elizabeth I's strengthened monarchy, enforced Anglicanism, suppressed Catholics and Puritans
- ◆ James I's advocated for divine right, clashed with Parliament, financial mismanagement worsened
- ◆ Charles I's dismissed Parliament, imposed taxes, faced rebellion and war
- ◆ Catholic favouritism, Puritan opposition, Anglican disputes fuelled tensions
- ◆ Monarchs imposed unauthorised taxes, leading to parliamentary resistance
- ◆ Puritans, Levellers, Diggers, Quakers, and others challenged authority
- ◆ Led New Model Army, executed Charles I, established military rule
- ◆ Major battles fought; Parliament secured northern England
- ◆ Presbyterians sought compromise; Independents demanded radical reforms
- ◆ Monarchy abolished, Cromwell became Lord Protector, enforced strict rule

## Objective Questions

1. Who succeeded Queen Elizabeth I as the ruler of England?
2. Which document did the House of Commons introduce in 1604 to assert their rights and privileges?
3. Which tax was extended by Charles I to inland towns without Parliament's consent?
4. Who led the Puritan opposition in Parliament during the early phases of the Civil War?
5. What was the name given to the king's supporters during the English Civil War?
6. Which radical movement sought to abolish private property and social class distinctions?

7. What title did Oliver Cromwell assume after the execution of Charles I?
8. Who is known as “the wisest fool in Christendom”?
9. Who put forward the Petition of Right in 1628?
10. Which has been otherwise known as “Puritan Revolution”?
11. Who were Diggers?
12. Who wrote the Book “The Law of Freedom”?

## Answers

1. James I
2. The Common Apology
3. Ship money
4. John Pym
5. The Diggers
6. Cavaliers
7. Lord Protector
8. James I
9. Sir Thomas Wentworth
10. English Civil War
11. Radical group led by an ex-textile merchant, Gerrard Winstanley
12. Gerrard Winstanley

## Assignments

1. Analyse the role of Parliament in the English Civil War. How did its power struggle with the monarchy shape the events leading up to the war?
2. Explain the significance of Oliver Cromwell and the New Model Army in the outcome of the English Civil War. How did Cromwell's leadership impact the political landscape of England?
3. Compare and contrast the perspectives of different intellectual movements during the Civil War, such as the Puritans, Levellers, Diggers, and Quakers. How did their ideologies influence the course of the war?
4. Evaluate the impact of the English Civil War on English society. What were the immediate and long-term effects on governance, the economy, and social structures?

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# Glorious Revolution of 1688

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the causes and nature of the Glorious Revolution
- ◆ explain the role of key figures and political factions
- ◆ discuss the significance of the Revolution in Constitutional development
- ◆ examine different historical interpretations of the Glorious Revolution, including Whig, Revisionist, and Marxist perspectives

### Prerequisites

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 was a transformative event in English history that marked the rise of constitutional monarchy and the decline of absolute rule. It was driven by political, religious, and social tensions, particularly King James II's attempts to impose Catholic absolutism, which alienated Parliament and the people. The revolution saw the peaceful overthrow of James II and the ascension of William and Mary, establishing Parliament's supremacy and securing individual rights through the 1689 Bill of Rights. This revolution not only shaped England's political future but also influenced broader global movements toward democracy. In this unit, we have explored the causes, key figures, and consequences of the Glorious Revolution, understanding its role in shaping modern liberalism and constitutional governance.

### Keywords

Revolution, Whigs and Tories, Revisionist view, Two Treatises of Government, Republic, Royalist, Glorious Revolution

## Discussion

The Civil War did not truly end with the formation of the Commonwealth. Despite the removal of the King, the Royalist challenge remained, and Oliver Cromwell had to address ongoing issues. Cromwell, a commoner with sympathies toward Parliament's goals, ruled without seeking absolute power for himself, unlike the kings before him. Although he ruled as a de facto dictator, he did not claim divine sanction for his authority or adopt royal rituals and titles.

Cromwell reversed many Monarchical policies, aligning with the interests of the new gentry and middle classes. He suppressed the Irish rebellion in 1649, conquered Scotland in 1650-51, and engaged in wars with the Dutch Republic and Spain. In 1653, he dissolved the Rump Parliament due to differences over religious policy and finances, then formed a new Parliament but soon dissolved it as well. He assumed the title of "Lord Protector," distinct from that of a king, under the constitution known as the Instrument of Government. Power was shared between the Lord Protector and the Council of State, and the Parliament included elected representatives from England, Scotland, and Ireland, though only the landed aristocracy could vote. This Parliament had the constitutional power to make laws and levy taxes, producing England's first written constitution.

Cromwell's rule also saw significant land sales, particularly from the Church and Royalists, which solidified the new gentry's control over private property. The Navigation Acts of 1651 boosted commercial capital and colonial interests. Despite these changes, the Civil War did not officially end during the Commonwealth, as the New Model Army remained influential, having played key roles in suppressing rebellions

and fighting the Royalists.

Cromwell favoured Puritanism over Catholicism, distancing himself from the Anglican Church. After Cromwell's death, his son Richard failed to maintain control, leading to the restoration of the monarchy with Charles II, the son of the former king. This marked the end of the Commonwealth experiment and the beginning of the Restoration.

### 2.2.1 Nature of Glorious Revolution

The Victorian historian Thomas Babington Macaulay, in his work *History of England*, first published in the mid-nineteenth century, put forward a thesis that became the definitive statement of the Whig interpretation of the 1688 Revolution. His perspective had several key aspects. First, he argued that the English Revolution of 1688 was not truly revolutionary, as it was bloodless, consensual, and driven by the aristocracy. Second, he emphasised the Protestant character of the revolution. Third, Macaulay believed the revolution highlighted the exceptional nature of the English national character. Lastly, he contended that there were no significant social grievances driving the revolution.

### 2.2.2 Causes For the Rise of Glorious Revolution

#### 2.2.2.1 Kings Elevation of Roman Catholicism

In 1685, the Catholic King James II ascended to the throne of England and sought to reintroduce Catholicism to the country. He established a new and illegal ecclesiastical commission to pressure England's Protestant universities into accepting Catholic fellows.

When the fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford, refused to comply with the King's demands, he transformed the institution into a Catholic seminary. Additionally, he was unsuccessful in convincing the House of Commons or the House of Lords to repeal laws that prohibited Roman Catholicism in England.

In 1687, James II issued the 'Declaration of Indulgence', also known as the Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, which granted religious freedom to minorities such as Catholics, Protestant dissenters, Unitarians, Jews, and Muslims. When seven bishops of the Church of England opposed this declaration, he had them dragged into court for a public trial.

### **2.2.2.2 King's Relationship with France**

King James II was heavily influenced by the political model of his cousin, Louis XIV of France. Like Louis, James wanted Catholic subjects but not papal control. He insisted on absolute sovereignty within his own realm while attempting to Catholicise his Protestant nation. He promoted Catholic apologetic literature, encouraged the growth of Catholic schools and colleges, and facilitated the opening of Catholic churches. James II envisioned a vastly expanded empire that would form a modern Catholic state. His opponents, however, were revolutionaries, not reactionaries. They criticised him for attempting to create a French-style absolutism in England. While the 1688 Revolution was less bloody than the French Revolution, it was still a popular and divisive movement. The revolutionaries rejected the modern, bureaucratic absolutist state modeled after Louis XIV's France.

James II remained steadfast in his beliefs and policies, but his despotic and unparliamentary rule only worsened the situation. He alienated his Tory supporters by

suspending the penal laws against Catholics and dissenters. His personal commitment to Roman Catholicism threatened the English constitutional framework. His aggressive religious reforms accelerated the crisis and led to the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

King Charles II, who was crowned on April 23, 1661, disbanded the New Model Army and gained the affection of most of his subjects. He sought to restore confidence in the monarchy and favoured Catholics among his ministers, seemingly attempting to appeal to Dissenters. In 1670, he secretly allied with Louis XIV of France, assuring the French king that he would convert to Catholicism when political circumstances in England allowed. He also lifted restrictions on religious worship and repealed laws targeting Catholics and dissenting Protestant groups.

### **2.2.2.3 Role of Whigs and Tories**

By the 1670s, the Tories and Whigs had become well-defined political factions within Parliament. The Tories were members of Parliament who supported parliamentary supremacy and limited powers for the monarchy. They believed in the institution of monarchy as the constitutional head with all its traditional powers. The two factions, the Tories and the Whigs, differed on matters of religion and the supremacy of the church. The Tories argued that God had instituted the King's place in society, and that resistance to royal authority was both a political and religious offense. In contrast, the Whigs believed that government existed to serve human ends, and while legally constituted authority should be obeyed, if a government threatened the rights of its subjects, it could be overthrown. In 1681, Charles II attempted to rule without Parliament.

In 1679, the Whigs passed the Habeas Corpus Act, which protected private property, safeguarded against arbitrary royal power,

and established legal rights for the accused. Amid a constitutional struggle between the king and Parliament, James II's stubborn exercise of his prerogatives led a Whig-majority Parliament to invite William and Mary of Orange to take the throne and restore Protestantism. One of the daughters of Charles II, Mary, had married William of Orange, a Protestant Dutchman and the stadholder of the Netherlands. William believed that England would support the Dutch in their efforts to resist the aggressive actions of Louis XIV. His followers began to move to England to support his cause.

In response, James II appointed Catholic officers to his new regiment to face William's troops. He relied on his navy to safeguard his throne. As a gesture of compromise, he promised to summon a free parliament, but it was already too late. William accused James of committing arbitrary acts against the nation, the Church, and Parliament. On November 5, 1688, William landed at Torbay on the English Channel with an army of 15,000 men. He marched to London, while James was in a state of near physical and psychological collapse. James promised to summon Parliament and allow William's supporters to sit, but riots broke out against his rule and Catholics. In the face of this unrest, James fled England for exile in France.

Parliament then invited William and Mary to take the throne together. William ascended to the English throne in a bloodless coup. This event became known as the Glorious Revolution of 1688 because it occurred without bloodshed, bringing an end to over fifty years of conflict. This led to the "Glorious Revolution," a term used by Whig historians, as it secured Parliament's rights and established it as a structural component of the English political system. The 1689 Bill of Rights institutionalised this, laying the foundation for the modern constitutional parliamentary system with two Houses of Parliament, a model later adopted worldwide.

## 2.2.3 Result of Glorious Revolution

The Glorious Revolution marked a pivotal moment in England's history, discrediting the doctrine of the 'Divine Right' of Kings and effectively limiting absolute monarchy. It brought about the rise of constitutional monarchy, ending the long conflict between the King and Parliament, with Parliament emerging victorious. The Revolution also weakened feudalism and transformed England's socio-economic landscape, paving the way for the Commercial and Industrial Revolutions. Additionally, it fostered a political system that supported the growth of capitalism.

The Revolution of 1688 inspired other global revolutionary movements, influencing the American and French Revolutions. The idea of limited government, central to the English Revolution, had a lasting impact on political thinkers like Voltaire, Jefferson, and Thomas Paine, and some aspects of the English Bill of Rights were reflected in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man in 1789.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689 marked the failure of James II's attempt to establish a Catholic absolutism and paved the way for the continuation and expansion of England's long-standing traditions of Parliamentary government and the Rule of Law. Trevelyan argued that the Revolution provided England with an ordered, legal freedom, and through that, it granted her power. However, opinions on the true significance of this revolution have varied.

One result of the revolution was the evolution of the English Constitution, marking the beginning of a new era. The relationship between the crown and Parliament evolved in ways that those involved in the revolutionary settlement could not have anticipated. The war situation led to an enormous expansion of

armed forces and administrative departments, transforming Britain's finances and ultimately turning it into a global power.

Historians generally regard the Glorious Revolution as a pivotal event in English history, setting in motion changes that eventually led to the creation of modern Britain. However, Christopher Hill challenged this view. Marxist historians typically overlook the 1688 Revolution, viewing the events from 1640 to 1660 as more significant for the socio-economic development of England. The 1688 Revolution is also seen as the culmination of 17th-century struggles, providing a resolution to long-standing conflicts rather than being an isolated incident.

John Miller argued that the importance of the Glorious Revolution lay in both what it prevented and what it achieved. He noted that it prevented the restoration of absolute rule and the royal prerogatives, as well as the Catholic revival. The Revolution, he emphasised, was neither populist nor radical in nature.

The Revolution of 1688 unified the state of England under parliamentary control, ending the persistent threat of absolutism. The English Parliament, particularly the House of Commons, gained control over the money it allocated to the King by including precise appropriation clauses. This diminished the monarchy's independence, especially in matters like taxation. As a result, Parliament expanded its influence. Parliamentary rule was further solidified through control over taxation, and the institution assumed a central role in matters of trade and the chartering of commercial companies. This shift created conditions that encouraged greater mobilisation of capital for overseas ventures, while exclusive privileges and monopolies were dismantled.

The revisionist perspective holds that the

revolution was largely driven by external forces, specifically a successful invasion supported by much larger forces than those available to James II. It was, according to this view, motivated by strategic and diplomatic concerns in Europe rather than domestic English issues. Revisionists also suggest that the Glorious Revolution did not resolve all the problems faced by the Stuarts, but rather marked a period of transformation and provided a permanent solution to the constitutional struggle.

G.E. Aylmer argued that, in many respects, the revolutionary events had lasting and significant importance. He also pointed out that the Revolution, though in a limited manner, introduced principles of religious tolerance based on liberal and progressive ideas.

In his *Two Treatises of Government*, John Locke justified the Revolution and, in his *Second Treatise*, he sought to analyse it. Locke viewed those who regarded political societies as tools for achieving both individual and collective benefits as rational. However, he did not clearly define the nature of the contract between the ruler and the ruled. He noted that such a contract granted the ruler certain rights and obligations, with the expectation that these rights would be exercised to serve specific purposes. Locke also argued that authority could be revoked if it was not exercised for the common good.

## 2.2.4 Post-Revolutionary Period in England

The post-revolutionary period created England's first national Bank, the Bank of England. England's new governors also transformed the religious character of the nation. The post-revolutionary church leaders demanded a broader church and one that was willing to tolerate religious practice outside that church. The Revolution and Toleration Act of 1689 separated church from nation.

## Recap

- ◆ Glorious Revolution (1688-89) transformed English governance and politics
- ◆ Considered the first modern revolution, shaping liberal political thought
- ◆ Ended absolute monarchy, establishing constitutional monarchy and parliamentary supremacy
- ◆ Cromwell's rule set the stage, but monarchy was restored before 1688
- ◆ James II's Catholic policies triggered opposition and revolution
- ◆ Influenced by Louis XIV, James II sought Catholic absolutism
- ◆ Whigs and Tories divided over monarchy's power and religious policies
- ◆ William of Orange invaded England, leading to James II's exile
- ◆ 1689 Bill of Rights institutionalised constitutional governance
- ◆ Revolution ended divine right of kings, empowering Parliament
- ◆ Inspired American and French revolutions with ideas of limited government
- ◆ John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* justified revolutionary change
- ◆ Bank of England founded post-revolution, transforming financial systems
- ◆ Toleration Act (1689) reshaped religious policies, separating church and state

## Objective Questions

1. Who was the Catholic king of England at the time of the Glorious Revolution?
2. The Glorious Revolution led to the rise of which type of government in England?
3. Which historical work by Thomas Babington Macaulay presented the Whig interpretation of the Glorious Revolution?
4. What was the name of the law passed by the Whigs in 1679 that

protected private property and individual rights?

5. James II's political model was heavily influenced by which European ruler?
6. Which English monarch restored the monarchy after the Commonwealth period?
7. Who was invited by Parliament to take the English throne after the overthrow of James II?
8. What key document institutionalised the constitutional changes brought by the Glorious Revolution?
9. Who wrote *Two Treatises of Government*?
10. Which were the two factions that had emerged in Parliament in 1670?

## Answers

1. James II
2. Constitutional Monarchy
3. *History of England*
4. Habeas Corpus Act
5. Louis XIV of France
6. Charles II
7. William and Mary
8. The Bill of Rights (1689)
9. John Locke
10. Whigs and Tories

## Assignments

1. Explain the significance of the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 in the context of English history.
2. Discuss the role of Oliver Cromwell in shaping England's political landscape before the Restoration.
3. How did the Glorious Revolution influence constitutional governance and the concept of parliamentary supremacy?
4. Discuss the impact of the Revolution of 1688 on England's socio-economic development, particularly in relation to feudalism and capitalism.
5. Examine the views of historians such as John Locke, Thomas Babington Macaulay, Christopher Hill, and John Miller on the nature and impact of the Glorious Revolution.

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# Bill of Rights

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ analyse the significance of the Magna Carta, Petition of Right and Bill of Rights in shaping English constitutional history
- ◆ explain the significance of the Mutiny Act, Toleration Act, Triennial Act, and Act of Settlement in shaping England's political and religious framework
- ◆ describe the historical context of the Magna Carta and its role in limiting royal power
- understand how the Bill of Rights formally established parliamentary supremacy over the monarchy

### Prerequisites

The historical development of English rights was significantly influenced by three key charters: the Magna Carta (1215), the Petition of Right (1628), and the Bill of Rights (1689). These documents imposed legal limitations on the monarchy, gradually shifting power toward Parliament and formalising the rights of the people. The Magna Carta, issued under King John's rule amid conflicts over taxation and feudal rights, laid the foundation for the principle that even the monarchy was subject to the law. The Petition of Right emerged during Charles I's reign when he bypassed Parliament to impose taxes and imprison opponents, leading to tensions that eventually culminated in the English Civil War. Following the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the Bill of Rights was introduced to address grievances against James II's rule and to solidify Parliament's supremacy over the monarchy. It established key legal principles, including the prohibition of cruel punishments, the right to free elections, and restrictions on the king's ability to levy taxes or maintain a standing army without parliamentary approval. These constitutional reforms fundamentally reshaped England's governance, marking a shift from absolute monarchy to a constitutional system where the monarchy and Parliament coexisted with clearly defined roles.

# Keywords

Magna Carta, Petition of Right, The Bill of Rights, Parliament, Constitutional Monarchy, Charter

## Discussion

Three English charters of liberty are centrally important in the development of English rights.

1. Magna Carta 1215
2. Petition of Right 1628
3. The Bill of Rights 1689

These three charters imposed legal limitations on the power of the English monarchy. Over time, these charters shifted the balance of power in government towards parliament, which represented the people. They also acknowledged parliament's authority and the rights of the people in official written documents.

### 2.3.1 Magna Carta 1215

The Magna Carta, a charter of English liberties, was granted by King John on June 15, 1215, under the threat of civil war and was reissued in 1216, 1217, and 1225. It marked the first time a monarch was declared subject to the rule of law, establishing the foundation for individual rights in Anglo-American jurisprudence. Its origin stems from earlier royal concessions, including Henry I's Charter of Liberties (1100) and subsequent oaths, which promised good governance and respect for the rights of the barons.

King John's reign was marked by conflicts over taxation, feudal rights, and a dispute with the Pope, leading to widespread discontent among the nobility. The Magna Carta was

crafted in response to these tensions and, after negotiations, was sealed at Runnymede in June 1215. The document sought to limit royal authority, guarantee the rights of free men, and provide a framework for feudal law, including provisions on inheritance and justice. It also included clause 61, which allowed barons to form a council to ensure the king adhered to the terms, hinting at the notion of limited monarchy.

Following John's death in 1216, his son, Henry III, reissued the Magna Carta with revisions, omitting temporary clauses and refining legal aspects. Subsequent reissues in 1217 and 1225 clarified further provisions on inheritance and the royal forest, and by 1225, the Magna Carta had become a symbol of resistance against oppression.

The Magna Carta's legacy lies not in its detailed feudal provisions but in its broad clauses, particularly those enshrining individual liberties, such as the right to due process. These ideas influenced later legal documents, including the Petition of Right (1628), the Habeas Corpus Act (1679), and the U.S. Constitution. Today, it is remembered not only for its legal content but for its historical significance in establishing the principle that even kings are bound by the law.

### 2.3.2 Petition of Right 1628

From the time of the Magna Carta until the 1600s, the growing power of Parliament gradually restricted the authority of the

King of England. Even the King was not permitted to tax his subjects without Parliament's consent. However, in 1626, King Charles I entered into a critical conflict with Parliament. He needed money to fund military expenses for wars in Europe, but Parliament refused to support his military efforts or approve tax increases. In response, Charles I forced citizens to grant him loans or provide resources. When some people refused, the king had them imprisoned. This led to a wave of public protest, with Sir Edward Coke emerging as one of the most prominent voices.

Sir Edward Coke argued that English common law was the foundation of the people's rights. English common law, based on tradition and judicial decisions rather than written statutes, was, according to Coke, inviolable, and the king had no authority to alter it. In 1628, Coke played a key role in persuading Parliament to pass the Petition of Right. However, in 1629, Charles I dissolved Parliament, imprisoned his opponents, and began a period of autocratic rule from 1629 to 1640. This period led to rebellion and the eventual revolution of 1649, culminating in Charles I's capture and execution. The monarchy was temporarily abolished.

On March 17, 1628, Sir Edward Coke rallied enough support in Parliament to pass the Petition of Right. This document declared fundamental rights in England, drawing on the principles of the Magna Carta and common law. It stipulated that Parliament would only approve funding if the king accepted their petition, which reaffirmed the longstanding rights of the common law. Though Charles I reluctantly agreed, he did secure the money he needed for his military expenses.

The Petition of Right outlined four primary points:

1. No taxation without the consent

of Parliament.

2. No imprisonment without just cause.
3. No quartering of soldiers in private homes.
4. No martial law during peacetime.

The Glorious Revolution led to significant, permanent changes in the constitutional history of England. After the revolution, a series of Acts passed by Parliament helped to establish constitutional arrangements based on England's historical experience. These Acts sought to address the shortcomings of the restoration period.

### 2.3.3 Constitutional Settlement

Following the Glorious Revolution, the relationship between the crown and Parliament was redefined through several acts passed between 1689 and 1701. This included the Bill of Rights, the Mutiny Act, and the Toleration Act, all enacted in 1689, as well as the Triennial Act of 1694 and the Act of Settlement in 1701. A financial settlement was also reached to regulate the future functioning of the government. This period marked a turning point in English history. The fact that William and Mary were placed on the throne by the will of Parliament became a key constitutional milestone. To gain support from the Tories, the Whigs introduced moderate solutions.

### 2.3.4 Bill of Rights 1689

The Declaration of Rights addressed the grievances of the English Parliament against the government of James II and outlined the reforms Parliament demanded. When William and Mary ascended the throne, they accepted these conditions. The Bill of Rights reaffirmed the rights already held by English subjects, which were established by the Petition of Right during the reign

of Charles I. The powers of suspension held by the Stuart rulers were abolished, and dispensing powers were condemned. Parliament abolished the Ecclesiastical Courts and prohibited the levying of taxes without parliamentary consent. The king's ability to maintain a standing army during peacetime was eliminated, a provision considered to represent the statutory power of the king. Furthermore, it became impossible for the king or his queen to be Roman Catholics.

In 1689, Parliament passed the Bill of Rights, which ratified the events of the 1688 Revolution and became a significant moment in English history. It was accepted by King William and Queen Mary at a time when representative bodies across much of Europe were weakened, as absolute monarchs were consolidating power.

The English Bill of Rights established the supremacy of Parliament over the monarchy. The monarch would reign but not rule, and their reign would be subject to Parliament's approval. From 1689 onward, no king could legally violate the provisions of the Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights set legal limits on the powers of the King and Queen of England. For instance, the monarch could no longer suspend acts of Parliament, maintain a standing army during peacetime, interfere with the free election of House of Commons representatives, impose cruel or unusual punishment on prisoners or accused individuals, demand excessive or unreasonable bail for accused criminals, or deny the right to petition.

The Bill of Rights secured property owners' rights to self-government and ensured the accused were protected by the rule of law. It reaffirmed Parliament's financial authority over the government and enumerated what a monarch should not do, thereby reducing royal control over the army.

### 2.3.4.1 Provisions of the Bill of Rights

- ◆ **Article 1 & 2:** Laws should not be dispensed or suspended without the consent of Parliament.
- ◆ **Article 4 & 6:** No army should be raised during peacetime, and no taxes should be levied without Parliament's consent.
- ◆ **Article 13 & 8:** Parliament should be summoned frequently, and elections should be free.
- ◆ **Article 9:** Members of Parliament should be able to speak and act freely.
- ◆ **Article 10:** No cruel or unusual punishment should be inflicted.

### 2.3.5 Other Important Acts

#### 2.3.5.1 The Mutiny Act

The Mutiny Act sought to address issues surrounding the king's control of the standing army and defined the special obligations of military discipline. It stated that military discipline should be enforced through court-martial. Parliament recognised the necessity of a standing army due to the ongoing war England was involved in. Subsequently, Parliament decided to control the army through financial settlements, making annual grants and appropriating specific taxes for this purpose. The government's main departments were also brought under parliamentary control.

#### 2.3.5.2 The Toleration Act 1689

The Toleration Act, passed in 1689, was a relatively modest measure in its scope. It allowed Protestant Dissenters to practice their religion freely, but they were still excluded from participating in political life and public

service. Catholics, however, were not granted the right to practice private worship until 1828. Individuals who refused to take the oath of allegiance were subject to fines or imprisonment. Therefore, the Toleration Act did not extend full religious freedom to all English subjects.

### 2.3.5.3 The Triennial Act of 1694 and Freedom of Press Act

The Triennial Act and the Freedom of Press Act were additional legislative measures introduced by the Whig-dominated Parliament. The Triennial Act ensured that Parliament would meet at least once every three years, safeguarding the regularity of parliamentary sessions. The Freedom of Press Act was a step towards greater press freedoms, although its scope remained limited.

### 2.3.5.4 The Act of Settlement

#### 1701

The Act of Settlement, a response to the English experience of being ruled by a foreign monarch who had entangled England in foreign wars and appointed outsiders to key positions in the English administration, was one of the most far-reaching legislative acts of the period. It established that the decisions of the Privy Council could not be ignored, and that crown officials were ineligible to serve as members of the House of Commons or as judges. This act determined the future constitutional relationship between the crown and Parliament, establishing a system where both the King and Parliament were partners, with neither holding supreme authority on its own.

## Recap

- ◆ Magna Carta (1215): Limited monarchy, established rule of law, individual rights
- ◆ Petition of Right (1628): No taxation, imprisonment, quartering soldiers, or martial law
- ◆ Bill of Rights (1689): Parliamentary supremacy, monarch's power restricted, legal rights secured
- ◆ Mutiny Act: Parliament controlled the military, enforced discipline through court-martial
- ◆ Toleration Act (1689): Religious freedom for Protestants, Catholics excluded
- ◆ Triennial Act (1694): Regular parliamentary sessions mandated every three years
- ◆ Freedom of Press Act: Expanded but limited press freedoms
- ◆ Act of Settlement (1701): Defined constitutional monarchy, regulated royal appointments

## Objective Questions

1. Which document was the first to declare that the monarch was subject to the rule of law?
2. Who granted the Magna Carta in 1215?
3. Which act established the supremacy of parliament over the king and queen?
4. Which King clashed with Parliament in 1626 over taxation issues?
5. Which English lawyer played a key role in passing the Petition of Right?
6. The Bill of Rights (1689) was passed after which event?
7. Which monarchs accepted the conditions of the Bill of Rights (1689)?
8. When did Parliament pass a Bill of Rights?
9. The Mutiny Act primarily dealt with which issue?
10. The Toleration Act of 1689 allowed religious freedom for which group?

## Answers

1. Magna Carta 1215
2. King John of England
3. Bill of Rights
4. King Charles I
5. Sir Edward Coke
6. Glorious Revolution
7. William and Mary
8. 1689

9. Military discipline
10. Protestant Dissenters

## Assignments

1. Explain the significance of the Magna Carta (1215) in shaping the legal and constitutional framework of England.
2. Discuss the key grievances that led to the drafting of the Petition of Right (1628). How did Sir Edward Coke contribute to its development, and what were its long-term implications for the English monarchy?
3. Analyse the impact of the Bill of Rights (1689) on the constitutional development of England.
4. Compare and contrast the Magna Carta, Petition of Right, and the Bill of Rights in terms of their objectives, key provisions, and impact on governance in England.
5. What role did the Glorious Revolution (1688) play in shaping the constitutional changes that followed?

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# American War of Independence

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the economic, political, and ideological factors that led to the American Revolution
- ◆ compare different historiographical perspectives on the American Revolution
- ◆ examine the social, economic, political, and cultural consequences of the American War of Independence
- ◆ discuss the contributions of key figures like George Washington, Thomas Paine, and Samuel Adams

### Prerequisites

The American War of Independence was the result of long-standing tensions between the thirteen American colonies and Great Britain. Britain's imposition of strict economic policies, such as the Navigation Acts, Sugar Act, and Stamp Act, fueled resentment among the colonists, who opposed taxation without representation. The British government's increased control, including the Quartering Act and the Townshend Acts, further escalated conflicts. Events like the Boston Massacre (1770) and the Boston Tea Party (1773) intensified colonial resistance, leading to the First and Second Continental Congresses. The war officially began in 1775 with armed conflicts at Lexington and Concord. The American Revolution was influenced by Enlightenment ideas, with figures like Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin advocating independence. Ultimately, the war resulted in American victory, formalised by the Treaty of Paris (1783), and led to significant political, economic, and social transformations. This unit highlights the causes, key battles, major figures, and the impact of the revolution, emphasising its role in shaping modern democracy and inspiring future movements for independence worldwide.

# Keywords

Thirteen Colonies, Mayflower, Mercantilist Policy, Seven Years War, Loyalists, Continental Congress, Continental Army

## Discussion

The Pilgrim Fathers were the settlers of Plymouth, Massachusetts, the first permanent colony in New England, established in 1620. Of the 102 colonists, 35 were members of the English Separatist Church, a radical Puritan faction that had previously fled to the Netherlands to escape persecution. Seeking religious freedom and a better life, the Separatists arranged with a London stock company to fund their voyage to America. The majority of those aboard the Mayflower were non-Separatists, hired to protect the company's interests, including figures like John Alden and Myles Standish. Although initially called the Old Comers or Forefathers, they became known as the Pilgrim Fathers after an 1820 bicentennial celebration, when Daniel Webster popularised the term, drawing from a manuscript by Gov. William Bradford referring to the group as "pilgrims."

### 2.4.1 The Thirteen Colonies

The thirteen colonies were British territories located along the eastern coast of the North American continent. Other European powers, including France and Spain, also had colonies on the continent. Many European settlers migrated in search of new economic opportunities. The thirteen colonies in North America were parochial, each with distinct perspectives, and had only limited communication with one another.

The thirteen colonies included New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North

Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Virginia was the first to be established in 1607. Although each colony was governed by its own assembly, they lacked representation in the British House of Commons. As Britain sought to raise funds, it imposed greater control over its American colonies, leading to tensions that would eventually escalate into rebellion.



Fig 2.4.1 Thirteen colonies

The first major imposition was the Sugar Act of 1764, followed by the Stamp Act of 1765, which placed duties on newspapers and other official documents. This move provoked strong opposition from the American colonists, whose primary grievance was that these taxes were imposed by the British Parliament rather than their local colonial assemblies. In response, groups of men organised protests under the name "Sons of Liberty" to resist these acts.

In 1765, the British government introduced the Quartering Act, requiring the colonies to provide housing for British soldiers in barracks funded by the colonies. If barracks were overcrowded, British regulars were to be accommodated in public houses, inns, or even vacant homes, with the costs borne by local colonial authorities.

#### 2.4.2 Nature of American Revolution

The American War of Independence was a complex conflict with military, political, ideological, and social dimensions, driven by the struggle for self-determination and the preservation of colonial rights against British tyranny. It marked the birth of the United States and challenged imperial authority. Historiographically, the war has been interpreted from various perspectives, with historians focusing on different aspects, such as military tactics, political ideals of liberty and governance, and the social dynamics of the revolution. Each interpretation offers unique insights into the multifaceted nature of the conflict.

David Ramsay and Mercy Otis Warren were two prominent contemporary historians of the American Revolution. Ramsay's *The History of the American Revolution* (1789) portrayed the struggle as a constitutional crisis, where virtuous colonists - farmers, merchants, and artisans - fought against British corruption to preserve self-government. Warren, the first female historian of the Revolution, wrote *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution* (1805), describing the Revolution as a fight for liberty and condemning British actions as efforts to impose tyranny. Both, having lived through the events they chronicled, framed their histories as moral lessons, cautioning against the dangers of corruption and the loss of civic virtue.

Prominent Loyalists, such as Thomas

Hutchinson, Jonathan Boucher, Peter Oliver, and Joseph Galloway, wrote histories of the American Revolution, some of which were published posthumously. These accounts typically sought to justify British actions during the imperial crisis. Hutchinson, however, argued that British party politics contributed to a disorganised approach to the colonies. Galloway, on the other hand, attributed the confusion in imperial policy to British officials' lack of understanding of the colonies. All Loyalist historians agreed that the rise of anti-British sentiment in the 1760s and 1770s was driven by a small group of influential men using demagoguery.

The Whig interpretation of the American Revolution is best represented by George Bancroft, whom Edmund Morgan described as "the first great historian to deal with [the Revolution]." Bancroft, like other 19th-century historians, used his wealth and leisure time to travel and gather primary sources for his extensive multi-volume history of the United States. The Whig interpretation viewed American history as a Providential journey toward liberty and democracy, breaking away from the tyranny of the Old World. In this view, the Revolution marked the Americans' claim to the traditions of liberty. This interpretation dominated much of the 19th century.

In the early twentieth century, historians began examining the colonial period from a British perspective, viewing it as part of imperial history rather than solely as a struggle for colonial liberty. Unlike the Whig historians, imperial historians did not perceive the British ministry and Parliament as tyrannical forces seeking to oppress the colonists. Instead, scholars such as George L. Beer, Charles Andrews, and Lawrence Gipson analysed British colonial policies and argued that Britain's efforts to regulate trade and generate revenue were reasonable, particularly given its war debt and the

relatively low tax burden on the colonists.

In the early 20th century, the Progressive interpretation emerged as a direct response to the Whig view, focusing on class conflict and economic interests rather than ideology. Progressives argued that revolutionary rhetoric was largely a cover for self-interest. Carl Becker's dual revolution thesis (1909) suggested that alongside the struggle against Britain, there was an internal class struggle over who would govern. Charles Beard further argued that economic and class interests influenced the Constitutional Convention and ratification process. Merrill Jensen later expanded this view, describing the Revolution as a populist uprising against local elites, with the Constitutional Convention serving as a counterrevolution by the aristocracy.

In the 1940s and 1950s, historians began seeking common ground in American history as a reaction to the Progressives' focus on conflict and the Cold War. Louis Hartz identified a broad consensus among colonists around the political philosophy of John Locke. Other consensus historians, like Daniel Boorstin, emphasised the conservative nature of the American Revolution. Meanwhile, some historians, including Forrest McDonald and Robert Brown, directly challenged Progressive ideas. McDonald refuted Charles Beard's economic interpretation of the Constitution, while Brown argued that a "middle-class democracy" already existed before the Revolution, countering the Progressives' focus on class conflict.

In 1953, Edmund S. Morgan argued that colonists' concerns about constitutionality were genuine and central to the Revolution, signaling a shift in how historians approached early American history. This idea, along with Douglass Adair's work, marked the beginning of the "neo-Whig" approach, which emphasised the importance of ideas. A key work in this ideological interpretation

was Bernard Bailyn's *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967), where he argued that colonists' ideology stemmed from the "radical Whig" republican tradition in England, which fostered a fear of tyranny and conspiracies. This explanation of colonial reactions to British policies in the 1760s became part of the "republican synthesis." However, historians like Joyce Appleby challenged this view, arguing that John Locke's liberalism was just as, if not more, fundamental to the Revolution. The "republicanism-liberalism" debate persisted for over a decade and became quite contentious.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, "social history" became dominant, focusing on the lives of everyday people. The Civil Rights and feminist movements sparked new interest in the history of race, slavery, and women in early America. Historians like Jesse Lemisch and Staughton Lynd, influenced by New Left politics, sought to highlight the agency of labouring-class colonists in a "history from the bottom up." Mary Beth Norton and Linda Kerber, in 1980, examined the Revolution's impact on women. In the 1980s and 1990s, neo-Progressive historians like Gary Nash and Ed Countryman revived interest in class conflict and the economic aspects of the Revolution, arguing that ordinary Americans were radical and pursued their own interests. In the last two decades, no single school of thought has dominated the study of the Revolution. Instead, various sub-fields - such as imperial history, Native American history, history of the West, and religious history - have expanded our understanding of the period.

"Founders Chic" refers to a term used to criticise popular histories of America's founding that gained traction in the 1990s. These works, by authors like David McCullough, Joseph Ellis, and Ron Chernow, often focused on the character of individual

founders, particularly glorifying figures like John Adams and Alexander Hamilton while critiquing figures like Thomas Jefferson. Some academic historians, such as Gordon Wood and Edmund Morgan, were frustrated that these popular, non-academic works sold millions, while their own historical works reached much smaller audiences.

Historians' interpretations of the American Revolution have been shaped by the times in which they lived, with each interpretation offering unique insights into the event. For those interested in exploring the historiography further, recommended readings include *Whose American Revolution Was It? Historians Interpret the Founding* by Alfred F. Young and Gregory H. Nobles (2011), *Interpreting the Founding* by Alan Gibson (2006), and *The Debate on the American Revolution* by Gwenda Morgan (2007).

### 2.4.3 Causes of American Revolution

The American revolution did not break out suddenly. There were many causes extended through several major events of the preceding years.

#### 2.4.3.1 Imperial Dominance

The 18th century was marked by shifting diplomatic alliances and power struggles between European empires, with Britain and France being two of the most prominent players. Both nations were deeply involved in colonial expansion and competition, constantly vying for control over new territories, resources, and trade routes across the globe. This rivalry was a significant backdrop to the events that eventually led to the American Revolution.

Britain, with its thirteen colonies in North America, had established a strong foothold along the Atlantic coast. These

colonies were diverse, both economically and culturally, but they all fell under the umbrella of British imperial control. The colonies were increasingly seen as vital to Britain's economic interests, providing raw materials, agricultural products, and a growing market for British manufactured goods. Britain, therefore, sought to maintain strict control over its American territories, ensuring that they served the empire's broader economic and political objectives.

France, on the other hand, had a different colonial focus. While Britain's American colonies were concentrated along the East Coast, France's territories were primarily located in Canada (New France) and along the Mississippi River in Louisiana. The French Empire's goal was to expand its influence in the New World, primarily for economic purposes, such as the fur trade and agricultural development. The French territories were less populated than the British colonies, but they played a key role in global commerce and diplomacy.

#### 2.4.3.2 Mercantilist Policy of Britain

Louis Hacker, an American economic historian, argues that the American Revolution was fundamentally a conflict between British mercantilism and the emerging capitalist economy of the American colonies. According to Hacker, the primary goal of British mercantilism was the prosperity of the mother country, often at the expense of its colonies. Under this system, Britain sought to control colonial economies to ensure they served British interests. The colonies were not allowed to develop independent, self-sustaining economies. Instead, they were viewed as subordinate entities that existed primarily to supply raw materials - such as tobacco, cotton, and timber - to Britain. These raw materials were then processed into finished goods in British factories, which

were subsequently sold back to the colonies, creating a dependent economic relationship.

To enforce this mercantilist system, England implemented a series of Navigation Acts, which were designed to regulate colonial trade and restrict the colonies' economic freedom. These laws required that certain goods could only be shipped to England or other British colonies, thereby limiting the colonies' ability to trade freely with other nations. The Navigation Acts ensured that the colonies remained a captive market for British goods while also providing raw materials that fueled Britain's industrial growth. However, as the American colonies grew and developed economically, many began to chafe under these restrictions. The colonists, increasingly influenced by ideas of free-market capitalism, saw these policies as stifling their economic potential. This growing sense of economic frustration and the desire for greater autonomy played a significant role in the ideological and political tensions that ultimately led to the American Revolution.

#### 2.4.3.3 Seven Years War

The Seven Years' War (1756-1763) was a pivotal conflict that shaped the future of North America and had far-reaching global implications. It was a truly global war, fought across Europe, Asia, North America, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Mediterranean Sea. The conflict began with the official declarations of war between France and Great Britain in May 1756. On the European front, King Frederick the Great of Prussia, an ally of Great Britain, launched military campaigns against a coalition of Austrian, French, and Russian forces. With financial support from Britain, Frederick was able to hold his ground and ultimately succeed in his campaigns. This victory helped establish Great Britain as the preeminent military power of the time, with a vast empire that

spanned multiple continents. The war was costly, both in terms of resources and lives, and it significantly strained Britain's finances.

In the North American theater, the war saw fierce fighting between British and French forces, with each side supported by various Native American tribes. The British victory in the conflict dramatically expanded the territorial boundaries of British America, as France ceded Canada and its territories east of the Mississippi River to Britain. However, this territorial gain came at a price. The British government, burdened with massive war debts, turned to the American colonies for financial relief, imposing a series of taxes and regulations, such as the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts, to help cover the costs of the war. These new taxes and restrictions created widespread unrest in the colonies, as many colonists felt that they were being unfairly taxed without representation in the British Parliament. The economic strain and growing sense of political discontent among the colonists set the stage for the revolutionary movement, as the desire for greater autonomy and independence from British control began to take root.

#### 2.4.3.4 Economic Policies of Britain

A series of laws were enacted to assert control over the colonial empire, starting in the 1650s. These laws restricted the use of foreign shipping for trade between England and its colonies, compelling the colonies to comply with these regulations.

The first **Navigation Act** of 1645 required that all goods traveling to and from the colonies be carried on British-flagged ships, meaning English colonies could only trade with Britain. The **Molasses Act of 1733** imposed a tax of six pence per gallon on molasses imported from non-British colonies, particularly targeting trade between New

England, the Middle Colonies, and French, Dutch, and Spanish West Indian possessions. This was intended to make British products cheaper than those from the French West Indies.

In 1764, the **Sugar and Currency Acts** were introduced, followed by the **Stamp Act** in 1765, which placed a tax on newspapers and other official documents. This sparked strong opposition among the American colonists, who objected to the taxes being imposed by the British Parliament rather than by their local colonial assemblies. In response, groups like the **Sons of Liberty** were formed to protest the acts. That same year, the **Quartering Act** was passed, requiring colonies to house British soldiers in barracks or public houses at the colonies' expense, further fueling colonial resentment.

The British government continued to impose taxes, which the colonists saw as a violation of their rights as British subjects. They argued that, like Englishmen at home, they should have full democratic and economic rights. Their rallying cry became "No taxation without representation," signaling that war was becoming inevitable. In response, the British Parliament passed the **Declaratory Act**, asserting that they still had the right to tax the colonies in all matters. The **Townshend Revenue Act** of 1767, which taxed goods like tea, paper, paint, glass, and lead, further angered the colonists. The revenue from these taxes was used to pay royal colonial officials, further undermining colonial self-governance. **George Washington**, speaking in the **Virginia House of Burgesses** in 1769, emphasised that only Virginians should be able to tax Virginians. Meanwhile, many merchants in ports vowed not to buy British goods or import British items. Finally, the **Quebec Act** of 1774 and the **Intolerable Acts** infuriated the colonists, pushing them even closer to rebellion.

#### 2.4.3.5 Role of Philosophers

*Common Sense*, a forty-page pamphlet, outlined the reasons for American independence from Great Britain. Written by Thomas Paine, it captured the sentiments of many dissatisfied colonists, giving voice to their frustrations. Paine targeted the common people, not the highly educated, and famously referred to King George III as "the royal Brute of Great Britain." His work inspired a significant number of Americans to join the revolution. In March 1776, the British were forced out of Boston, and by July 4, the colonies formally declared their independence. Paine also published eleven additional articles titled *The Crisis*, which, along with *Common Sense*, became among the most influential documents of the American Revolution.

Benjamin Franklin, a renowned writer, scientist, publisher, and inventor, also played a pivotal role in influencing the colonists. He convinced France to provide unofficial support to the war, helped unify the colonies, and contributed to drafting the Declaration of Independence. Franklin's writings, including satirical articles in local newspapers, mocked the Boston authorities and society. Samuel Adams, another key figure, used his writings and speeches to encourage rebellion. A leader in the Continental Congress and a drafter of the Declaration of Independence, Adams believed everyone, regardless of crime or cause, deserved legal representation. He anonymously penned articles in local newspapers, arguing that freedom was a gift from God, not from the king or parliament.

#### 2.4.3.6 Religious Motivation

Protestant churches became centers of democratic thought. Bernard Bailyn argues that the evangelical movements of the era challenged traditional hierarchies by teaching that the Bible emphasises the

equality of all men, asserting that a person's true value lies in their moral character, not their social rank. Congregationalists, Baptists, and Presbyterians spread revolutionary ideas through their sermons. The religious motivation to resist tyranny cut across social classes, uniting the rich and poor, men and women, frontiersmen and townspeople, farmers and merchants in the fight for independence.

#### 2.4.3.7 The Role the Loyalists

About one-third of the American population supported the revolution, while the remaining group, known as Loyalists, chose to stay loyal to the British government. These individuals, also called Tories, were content living under British rule and remained steadfast in their loyalty to King George III. Their opposition to the revolution was based on several factors, including their belief that Britain had valid reasons for governing the colonies and imposing taxes without representation. Additionally, many Loyalists doubted the revolution's chances of success, so they remained aligned with the crown in order to protect their positions and interests.

New York City and Long Island became the areas with the highest concentration of Loyalists by the war's end, while New England, often seen as the heart of the Revolution, had comparatively few Loyalists. The Loyalists played an important role in the conflict, leading efforts to organise Native American resistance against the revolutionaries. They also supported the British forces by providing manpower and essential supplies, thereby significantly influencing the course of the war.

#### 2.4.4 Events Leading to the Revolution

##### Boston Massacre

In 1768, British officials, seeking to maintain control over the increasingly restless

American colonies, stationed two regiments of British troops in Boston. The soldiers, known as Redcoats due to their distinctive red uniforms, were deployed primarily to enforce new taxes and maintain order following growing colonial unrest. Tensions had been rising for years, largely due to the British imposition of various taxes like the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts, which were deeply unpopular among the colonists who felt their rights were being violated. The presence of British troops only intensified these tensions, as the soldiers were seen as a symbol of British oppression and tyranny.

As protests against British policies became more frequent, hostilities between the soldiers and colonists escalated. On March 5, 1770, the situation reached a breaking point. A group of colonists began to taunt and throw objects at the soldiers, who were standing guard near the Customs House in Boston. In the midst of the growing chaos, the soldiers fired into the crowd, killing three colonists instantly and wounding five others, two of whom later died from their injuries. The incident, known as the Boston Massacre, was immediately used by colonial leaders as a tool for anti-British propaganda.

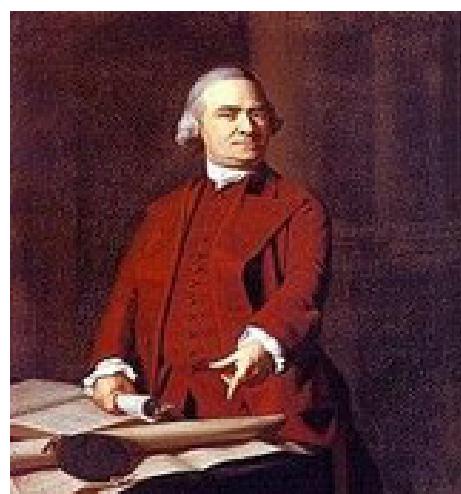


Fig 2.4.2 Samuel Adams

Samuel Adams was a key figure in the American Revolutionary movement, known

for his strong leadership and his role in organising resistance against British rule. As the founder of the Sons of Liberty and the Boston Committee of Correspondence, Adams played a pivotal role in mobilising public opinion and orchestrating protests against British policies, such as the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts. His political acumen and passionate advocacy for colonial rights made him a symbol of resistance in Massachusetts, where he became a popular writer, speaker, and organiser. Adams' writings, often published anonymously, stirred revolutionary sentiments and rallied the colonists to take action. His efforts to unite the colonies in their struggle for independence earned him both admiration from patriots and hostility from Loyalists, who saw him as a dangerous instigator. Adams' vision for an independent America, free from British oppression, contributed significantly to the momentum that led to the Declaration of Independence and the broader Revolutionary War.

### Boston Tea Party 1773



Fig 2.4.3 Boston Tea Party

In response to British policies that increasingly infringed upon their rights, the American colonists formed Committees of Correspondence, which were instrumental in organising communication and fostering unity among the colonies. These committees allowed the colonists to share information about British actions, raise awareness about the injustices they faced, and coordinate

responses. The pressure from the colonies was felt in Britain, and in 1770, King George II convinced Parliament to repeal most of the Townshend Acts. However, Parliament kept the tax on tea in place, which further inflamed tensions between the colonists and the British government. The continued imposition of this tax was seen by many as a symbol of British control and an affront to colonial self-governance.

On December 16, 1773, the frustration over the tea tax culminated in the Boston Tea Party, one of the most iconic acts of defiance in American history. That night, three British ships carrying tea docked in Boston Harbor, and a group of colonists, disguised as Native Americans, boarded the vessels. They proceeded to dump 342 chests of tea into the harbor as a protest against the tea tax, an act that was both a direct challenge to British authority and a symbolic declaration of resistance. The Boston Tea Party became a catalyst for escalating tensions and was one of the key events that led to the outbreak of the American Revolution. In retaliation, the British government enacted the Coercive Acts (also known as the Intolerable Acts), which included closing the Port of Boston and instituting martial law. British troops were sent to occupy the city, setting the stage for further conflict between the colonies and the Crown.

### First Continental Congress 1774

On September 5, 1774, twelve of the thirteen colonies sent representatives to the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia, with a total of 56 delegates in attendance. Georgia was the only colony not represented. The Continental Congress agreed that if the Intolerable Acts were not repealed, the colonies would impose a complete boycott of all English imports. The Congress also decided to convene a Second Continental

Congress the following year. If the Intolerable Acts remained in place by that time, the Second Continental Congress would focus on preparing for war with England.

### **Boston Siege(April 19, 1775- March 17, 1776)**

The Siege of Boston marked a pivotal moment, allowing both the Americans and the British to define their objectives for the revolution. The British crossed the narrow waterway separating Boston from Charleston and launched an attack on the Americans, resulting in the Battle of Bunker Hill. While the British were able to engage, the American siege of Boston successfully hindered the British army's progress. This extended siege played a crucial role in unifying the Continental Army. Following the Second Continental Congress, George Washington was selected to lead the army.

### **Second Continental Congress 1775**

The Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia on May 10, 1775, with notable participants such as Benjamin Franklin from Pennsylvania, John Hancock from Massachusetts, and Thomas Jefferson from Virginia. The Congress aimed to assess the effectiveness of the measures enacted during the First Continental Congress and to evaluate the ongoing relationship between the colonies and the British crown. Since the Revolutionary War had already begun three weeks earlier, the Second Continental Congress effectively transformed into the wartime government for the colonies.

### **Olive Branch Petition**

On July 5, 1775, the Second Continental Congress adopted the Olive Branch Petition, which was signed on July 8. Written by John Dickinson, a political moderate known as the "Penman of the Revolution," the petition was named after the olive branch, a symbol of peace and reconciliation. Dickinson, a

political moderate, sought to avoid conflict with Great Britain. He wrote the petition in the hope that King George III would intervene on behalf of the colonists to address their grievances regarding what they considered unconstitutional taxation by Parliament. Unfortunately, the Olive Branch Petition failed to open a dialogue between the colonists and the British crown.

With the outbreak of the war, the colonies lacked a professional standing army. The Continental Army, primarily armed with flintlock muskets and bayonets, faced significant logistical challenges, including severe shortages of food, clothing, ammunition, and tents due to the country's primitive road systems. Despite these struggles, the Continental Army unified soldiers from all thirteen states in their fight for independence. By the end of the war, the Continental Army consisted of 35,000 regulars and 44,500 militia, supported by 53 ships. On July 14, 1775, Congress officially authorised the formation of the Continental Army from the state militias around Boston and appointed George Washington as its commander.

### **George Washington**



Fig 2.4.4 George Washington  
Washington arrived in Boston on July

3, 1775, as the commander of 17,000 Continental soldiers. He worked on transforming militia companies and regiments into regular army units. Although their commanders and internal structure remained largely unchanged, Washington focused on improving leadership and discipline within the army. On September 16, 1776, Congress responded to his leadership by ordering the thirteen states to contribute 88 regiments based on their population size. By the end of the war, the total enlistment reached 231,771 soldiers.

Washington opposed the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts of 1767, urging Virginians to boycott English goods until the acts were repealed. In 1776, he turned the Siege of Boston and its harbor in favour of the rebels.

### **The Virginia Resolution (1776)**

The Virginia colonial assembly began discussions on independence on May 6, 1776. A resolution was introduced by Patrick Henry, which called for complete independence from Britain not just for Virginia, but for all thirteen colonies. On May 15, the Virginia Assembly unanimously adopted Henry's resolution. The Virginia delegates brought the resolution to the Continental Congress, formally calling for a vote on independence from England. This resolution, including its preamble, became a model for some of the grievances that would later be outlined in the Declaration of Independence.

### **American Allies**

The Americans did not fight alone against Great Britain. France, Spain, and the Netherlands all joined the colonies in the war. France and Spain, having suffered in the Seven Years' War, sought to retaliate against Britain and provided the rebels with war materials. However, after the revolution, the Americans gained far more from the

alliance than their European partners did.

### **Battle of Long Island 1776**

The Battle of Long Island, also known as the Battle of Brooklyn, was the first major battle and the largest of the American Revolution. It proved costly for the Americans, who sustained 1,500 casualties, including 200 deaths. On August 27, 1776, the British defeated the Americans and occupied the Port of New York.

### **Battle of Saratoga 1777**

The Battle of Saratoga marked a pivotal turning point in American history. It demonstrated that the Americans could defeat the British in a conventional battle, boosting revolutionary morale. At Lexington and Concord, the rebels had suffered from a lack of supplies and arms, the absence of a navy, and weak commitment from some colonists. Washington opted for a defensive strategy, engaging in a protracted war. In December 1776 and January 1777, he attacked British garrisons in Trenton and Princeton, New Jersey. Meanwhile, American Commander General Horatio Gates slowed the British by destroying bridges, felling trees, and creating obstacles. Eventually, British General John Burgoyne was surrounded.

### **Battle of Yorktown 1781**

The Battle of Yorktown marked the climax of the American Revolution. It saw the best of American and French military leaders face off against the largest British force in North America. General George Washington and French General Jean Baptiste de Rochambeau surrounded the retreating army of General Cornwallis, receiving support from Spain and the Netherlands. British Commander General Henry Clinton used his superior naval mobility to transfer Cornwallis's forces, but Cornwallis, claiming illness, sent his deputy to surrender in his place.

## Treaty of Paris

On September 3, 1783, the Treaty of Paris was signed, officially recognising the independence of the United States. After victory was declared, Washington disbanded the army and returned to his home in Mount Vernon. On December 23, 1783, he resigned as commander-in-chief of the army.

## Constitutional Convention

In 1787, the Constitutional Convention took place in Philadelphia, where Washington attended and presided as president. In 1789, he was unanimously elected as the first president of the United States.

### 2.4.5 Impacts of American War of Independence

The American Revolution emerged due to Great Britain's policies toward its colonies. Following the revolution, Britain redirected its focus away from the thirteen colonies, no longer considering them the cornerstone of its empire, and instead turned its attention to the vast potential of India. Additionally, the conflict compelled Britain to reassess the strengths and shortcomings of its military forces, leading to significant reforms in both the British Army and the Royal Navy.

#### 2.4.5.1 Economic Changes

The American War of Independence brought significant economic transformations, affecting different sectors in various ways. During the conflict, farmers who produced goods for local consumption experienced a period of economic prosperity due to soaring agricultural prices and unprecedented demand. The war effort created a high need for food supplies, and farmers benefited from selling their produce at increased rates. However, not all agricultural communities thrived - some regions suffered extensive damage from British troop movements,

which destroyed farmland, livestock, and storage facilities. Despite these hardships, British forces also contributed to the colonial economy by introducing British gold, which circulated in local markets and provided temporary financial stability in war-affected areas.

Following independence, the newly formed United States experienced both opportunities and challenges in trade and agriculture. Previously, the British Crown imposed strict regulations on the colonies' exports, limiting their ability to trade freely with foreign markets. With independence, these restrictions were lifted, allowing American merchants and farmers to explore new international trade relationships. However, the loss of Britain's economic support and preferential treatment within the empire also posed initial difficulties. Some markets that had been guaranteed under British rule became uncertain, requiring American producers to negotiate their own trade agreements. Despite these setbacks, the long-term economic impact was largely positive, as the United States gradually established a more diversified and self-sufficient economy, free from the mercantilist constraints of the British system.

#### 2.4.5.2 Social Changes

During the late colonial period, a well-established upper class of merchants and lawyers dominated the economic and political landscape of American cities. These individuals held the most advantageous positions, benefiting from lucrative trade, legal expertise, and connections to British authorities. However, the American Revolution disrupted this social hierarchy, particularly with the departure of Loyalists, many of whom were among the colonial elite. Their exodus created a power vacuum, opening opportunities for new individuals to rise to prominence. As a result, many ordinary

yet respectable citizens who had previously been excluded from positions of wealth and influence found themselves elevated into roles of economic and social prestige. The absence of Loyalist elites allowed for greater social mobility, enabling a new generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals to emerge.

The revolution also brought about significant changes in land ownership, particularly for tenant farmers. Before independence, many tenants were restricted to renting land from large landowners, with little opportunity to acquire property of their own. However, with the redistribution of Loyalist estates and the broader economic changes following the war, many tenants were able to purchase the land they had previously leased. This shift not only expanded the number of small property owners but also contributed to a more egalitarian distribution of wealth and economic power in some regions. Additionally, the increased supply of money in the post-war economy fostered both social and economic advancement, as individuals who previously lacked financial resources found new opportunities for prosperity. The transition from a rigid colonial hierarchy to a more fluid and open economic structure helped shape the emerging American society, reinforcing ideals of self-sufficiency and upward mobility.

#### 2.4.5.3 Cultural Changes

After the revolution, the Anglican Church experienced a significant decline in both influence and membership within the former colonies, losing much of its power as the official church of the British Empire. In contrast, the Catholic Church saw an increase in acceptance and growth, benefiting from the broader social and political changes brought about by independence. Additionally, the revolutionary spirit fostered an already developing secular trend, leading to a shift

away from religious dominance in various aspects of society.

In the realm of education, there was a growing emphasis on creating a system that would equip citizens with the knowledge and skills necessary for informed voting and professional success. This movement contributed to the establishment of state-supported colleges and other educational institutions that were independent of religious control, reflecting the new republic's commitment to intellectual advancement and civic responsibility.

Changes in literature and the arts occurred gradually, but the war's patriotic fervor strongly influenced writers and artists of the time. Many literary works focused on themes of national identity and independence, shaping the cultural landscape of the newly formed nation. The end of the war also marked the revival of theatrical performances, which had been restricted during the conflict. This resurgence of theater, along with the development of an indigenous folk culture, helped define and express the unique American identity in the post-revolutionary era.

#### 2.4.5.4 Political Changes

One of the most significant political changes following the American Revolution was the abolition of royal and proprietary governors, who had previously been appointed by the British Crown. These governors appointed by the British governors were replaced with new governors who held significantly less power. Unlike their predecessors, these officials had little authority over the military, land distribution, financial expenditures, foreign policy, or government appointments. Instead, they functioned primarily as representatives of the legislature, acting under its direction rather than exerting independent control. Their decisions and actions were subject to

legislative oversight, ensuring they remained accountable to both lawmakers and the public. Executive and judicial responsibilities, once concentrated in the hands of the royal governors, were distributed among other government bodies, typically chosen by the legislatures. This shift reflected the growing emphasis on representative government and the principle that power should be derived from the will of the people rather than from a distant monarchy.

Many historians believe that the estimated number of soldiers who served on the American side during the Revolutionary War is unreliable. Military historian Harry Williams noted that the widely accepted figure for American soldiers who died in the revolution was around 4,000. However, even two centuries later, historians continue to debate the accuracy of these numbers. The American Revolution remains one of the deadliest conflicts in U.S. history.

#### 2.4.5.5 French Revolution

The French Revolution was influenced in part by France's involvement in the American Revolution, which placed a significant strain on the nation's finances. Supporting the American cause with money, arms, and military aid deepened France's already substantial debt, worsening the economic crisis at home. The financial burden, coupled with years of mismanagement, unfair taxation, and food shortages, fueled widespread unrest among the French people. Additionally, the ideals of liberty, democracy, and resistance against tyranny that emerged from the American Revolution inspired many in France to question the legitimacy of their own monarchy and social hierarchy. The success of the American colonists in overthrowing British rule provided a powerful example, encouraging revolutionary sentiment among the French population and ultimately contributing to the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789.

### Recap

- ◆ Thirteen colonies located along North America's eastern coast
- ◆ Virginia (1607) was the first colony; each governed by its own assembly
- ◆ Taxation issues like the Sugar Act (1764) and Stamp Act (1765) fueled unrest
- ◆ Sons of Liberty organised protests against British taxation policies
- ◆ The Quartering Act (1765) required colonists to house British soldiers
- ◆ The American Revolution was a struggle for self-determination against British rule
- ◆ Boston Massacre (1770) increased anti-British sentiments
- ◆ Boston Tea Party (1773) protested the British tea tax
- ◆ First Continental Congress (1774) unified colonies against Britain

- ◆ Battle of Saratoga (1777) turned the war in America's favour
- ◆ Battle of Yorktown (1781) marked the final American victory
- ◆ Treaty of Paris (1783) officially recognised U.S. independence
- ◆ Economic shifts led to self-sufficiency and new global trade opportunities
- ◆ Political changes abolished royal governance and established democratic institutions
- ◆ Social impact saw increased land ownership and weakened aristocracy
- ◆ French Revolution (1789) was influenced by American revolutionary ideals

## Objective Questions

1. How many British colonies were there along the eastern coast of North America?
2. Which was the first colony to be established in 1607?
3. What was the main grievance of the American colonists regarding the Stamp Act of 1765?
4. What was the purpose of the Quartering Act of 1765?
5. Who was the author of *Common Sense*, a pamphlet advocating for American independence?
6. Which war significantly increased Britain's debt, leading to new taxation in the colonies?
7. What event led to the deaths of five American colonists on March 5, 1770?
8. Who was the commander-in-chief of the Continental Army?
9. Which treaty officially ended the American War of Independence?
10. Which battle marked the final victory of the American forces in 1781?
11. In which year was the Sugar Act passed?
12. Who introduced the Virginia Resolution?

## Answers

1. 13
2. Virginia
3. Tax imposed without representation
4. To provide housing for British soldiers
5. Thomas Paine
6. Seven Year's War
7. Boston Massacre
8. George Washington
9. Treaty of Paris (1783)
10. Battle of Yorktown
11. 1764
12. Patrick Henry

## Assignments

1. Analyse the impact of British economic policies, such as the Sugar Act, Stamp Act, and Townshend Acts, on the growing colonial resistance.
2. Compare and contrast the historiographical interpretations of the American Revolution.
3. Explain the role of Enlightenment ideas and philosophical influences, such as those of John Locke and Thomas Paine, in shaping the American Revolution.
4. Discuss the social and economic consequences of the American Revolution.
5. Discuss the impact of the Seven Years' War on the relationship between Britain and its American colonies.

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# Thomas Jefferson - Declaration of Independence

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the main principles and influences behind the drafting of the Declaration of Independence
- ◆ analyse the impact of the Declaration of Independence in shaping democratic governance in the United States
- ◆ examine the broader influence of the Declaration on French Revolution and democratisation efforts in England
- assess the contributions of key historical figures, including Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and Benjamin Franklin, in advocating for independence and democratic ideals

### Prerequisites

The Declaration of Independence was born out of escalating tensions between the American colonies and Great Britain, primarily due to grievances over British military presence, taxation without representation, and restrictions on self-governance. Thomas Jefferson, inspired by Enlightenment ideals, particularly John Locke's philosophy, drafted the document to assert that all individuals have inherent rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Declaration justified rebellion by outlining King George III's failures and declared the colonies' intent to form a new nation. The document underwent revisions before being formally adopted on July 4, 1776, marking the birth of the United States. This unit explores the historical circumstances leading to independence, the impact of key figures like Jefferson, Franklin, and Paine, and how democratic principles influenced later movements, including the French Revolution and reforms in England.

## Keywords

Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, Continental Congress, Bill of Rights, American Revolution, Articles of Confederation, Common Sense, French Revolution

## Discussion

The Declaration of Independence was a defining moment in American history, marking the formal separation of the thirteen American colonies from British rule. Drafted primarily by Thomas Jefferson, the document outlined the fundamental principles of self-governance and individual liberty, heavily influenced by John Locke's philosophy. Jefferson detailed the colonists' grievances against King George III, emphasising the monarchy's failure to protect their rights and justifying the colonies' decision to form an independent nation. Following its approval by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, the Declaration became a symbol of the American Revolution, inspiring political movements worldwide, including the French Revolution and the broader democratisation of England. The ideals enshrined in the Declaration of Independence laid the foundation for the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the modern principles of democracy and human rights.

### 2.5.1 Declaration of Independence

Thomas Jefferson was tasked with drafting the initial version of the document for the committee. When he submitted it to Congress, it included a list of grievances against Great Britain, such as the presence of British troops in the colonies and the imposition of taxes without the colonists' consent. The committee instructed Jefferson to address three key points: to explain the principles of good government, to detail

the reasons why King George had failed in his duties, and to formally announce the colonies' declaration of independence from Great Britain. Jefferson devoted more than two weeks to refining his essay, putting all his effort into crafting words that would resonate with everyone. He believed deeply that freedom was a fundamental right that no one should be deprived of, and he was elated when the other members of Congress eventually agreed with his words.

In his draft, Jefferson articulated the colonists' claim for independence, countering those who still believed that severing ties with Britain was foolish. He began by stating that all people are born with equal rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness - a concept inspired by the philosophy of John Locke, whom Jefferson had studied for many years. In the first section of the Declaration, he explained that a government's primary role was to protect these basic rights. If a government failed to do so, it forfeited its legitimacy, and the people were entitled to rebel. The second section critiqued Britain's government, listing King George's failures and asserting that he had hindered the colonists' ability to govern themselves.

#### 2.5.1.1 Preparing final Draft

The Congress spent two days reviewing Jefferson's draft and made several significant changes. One of the more controversial sections, where Jefferson criticised

Great Britain for its involvement in the slave trade, was rejected by the southern colonies, leading to its removal from the final version. On July 1, 1776, the five members of the Declaration of Independence Drafting Committee formally presented the completed document. The Continental Congress convened at Independence Hall in Philadelphia to approve the declaration, and the proposal passed overwhelmingly. On July 4, 1776, John Hancock, the president of the Continental Congress, signed the Declaration of Independence, with other delegates adding their signatures over the following months. A formal signing ceremony took place in August, with the document copied onto special paper and signed by all 56 delegates.

Congress was eager for the public to see the Declaration as soon as possible, so they had multiple handwritten copies made and distributed to all 13 colonies. Newspapers began printing the text on July 6, 1776. In New York, the announcement of the Declaration sparked excitement, leading the people to tear down a statue of King George. They melted it down to create over 40,000 bullets. In 1778, France signed the Treaty of Alliance, officially recognising the American colonies' independence and providing them with loans, arms, and troops. The conflict between the former colonies and Great Britain came to a close in 1781 at the Battle of Yorktown in Virginia, where British General Lord Charles Cornwallis was defeated by George Washington's Continental Army.

### 2.5.1.2 Articles of Confederation

On July 12, 1776, John Dickinson of Pennsylvania presented his committee's recommendations for the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union to the Continental Congress. As the revolution continued, Congress debated these Articles

before formally adopting them. On November 15, 1777, the Second Continental Congress officially adopted the Articles of Confederation, marking the country's first constitution. Copies of the Articles were sent to each state for ratification on November 17.



Fig 2.5.1 John Dickinson

In 1787, the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia, where delegates drafted the U.S. Constitution, enshrining many of the democratic principles and human rights outlined in the Declaration of Independence.

### American Bill of Rights

In 1789, the United States established a new federal government under the U.S. Constitution. James Madison, a Virginia representative in the U.S. House of Representatives, proposed the Bill of Rights during the first Federal Congress. On September 25, 1789, more than two-thirds of both houses of Congress approved 12 constitutional amendments based on Madison's original list. By December 15, 1791, 10 of these amendments were ratified by the states and became known as the Bill of Rights.

### 2.5.3 Advocates of Human Rights and the Independence Movement

#### Benjamin Rush

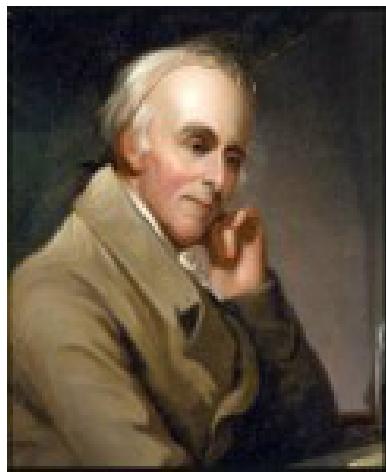


Fig 2.5.2 Benjamin Rush

Benjamin Rush, a Philadelphia physician, was one of the first to advocate for independence in the American colonies. He played an active role in the independence movement and was a member of the Sons of Liberty, a group that engaged in acts of rebellion against British rule. The Sons of Liberty were behind the Boston Tea Party of 1773. Rush also suggested to his friend Thomas Paine, the author of the pamphlet *Common Sense*, to rally those opposed to independence to join the movement.

### Thomas Paine

Thomas Paine was a fiery editor and essayist who became a prominent advocate for human rights and the independence movement. In January 1776, Paine published his influential pamphlet, *Common Sense*, nearly nine months after the first shots of the American Revolution were fired at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts. In this pamphlet, Paine made a powerful argument for independence, denouncing the English monarchy and advocating for the formation of a new nation governed by democratic ideals. He criticised the English aristocracy for exploiting the labour of the American colonists, extracting wealth from the colonies for their own benefit. Paine famously wrote, "Everything that is right or reasonable pleads for separation."



Fig 2.5.3 Thomas Paine

*Common Sense* not only fueled the call for independence but also laid the groundwork for a more significant document created six months later, the Declaration of Independence, which would become one of the most important documents in American history. It presented the case for independence and outlined the fundamental principles for a democratic society. Thousands of Americans were inspired by Paine's pamphlet, which boldly declared, "A Government of our own is our natural right." *Common Sense* was a catalyst for stirring the American determination for liberty, asserting that the role of government was to serve the people, promote their happiness, and protect their rights, rather than oppress them. It articulated the core values of democracy and freedom and passionately called for independence from England.

### Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin was a key figure in the Second Continental Congress, representing several colonies and serving as the deputy postmaster for the colonies. He was a member of the committee that drafted the Declaration of Independence and played a key role in moderating the discussions as changes were made to Thomas Jefferson's original draft. Franklin was a strong advocate for

independence and signed the Declaration of Independence. Throughout the proceedings, he worked to mediate disagreements and ensure unity among the delegates.



Fig 2.5.4 Benjamin Franklin

### Thomas Jefferson

Jefferson was elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses to represent Albemarle County, and his political career began in earnest. When the early rumblings of the American Revolution began, he was an active participant. In March 1772, he, along with Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, and others, met at the Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg, where they called for the formation of a standing committee to coordinate efforts with other colonies in resistance to British rule. In 1774, Jefferson drafted instructions for Virginia's delegates to the First Continental Congress, and worked on the document that outlined the American struggle for independence. He was elected to the Continental Congress, and when the Declaration of Independence was read, it was met with great enthusiasm.

After his term as congressman ended in September 1776, Jefferson returned to Monticello. He introduced forward-thinking legislation in Virginia, such as a law that allowed foreigners to be naturalised after two years of residency, and a bill that removed the

capital from Williamsburg to Richmond. He also championed the separation of church and state and worked alongside James Madison on religious freedom legislation, which was passed in 1786. Jefferson also proposed plans for freeing slaves, establishing free public education, and ending the death penalty for most crimes, many of which influenced future reforms.

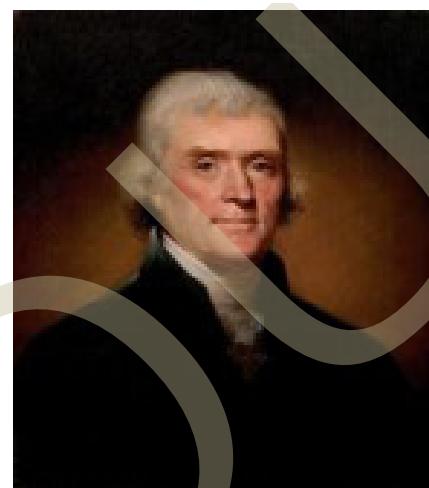


Fig 2.5.5 Thomas Jefferson

In 1779, Jefferson was elected governor of Virginia. When British General Cornwallis invaded Virginia in June 1781, Jefferson remained calm. He sent his family to safety and narrowly escaped capture, as Cornwallis's troops destroyed his estate at Elk Hill. After his term as governor ended, the Revolution ended in victory for the Americans with Cornwallis's defeat at Yorktown. In 1784, Jefferson was appointed as an envoy to Paris, where he observed the conditions of the French people and government during the early stages of the French Revolution. He later became the Secretary of State in George Washington's cabinet, though his political differences with Alexander Hamilton caused significant tension, eventually leading to Jefferson's resignation in 1792.

In 1795, Jefferson was encouraged to run for president by James Madison, and in 1796 he became vice president after receiving the

second-highest number of electoral votes. His political career reached its pinnacle when, in 1800, he was elected president, defeating John Adams. In 1805, Jefferson was re-elected by a large margin. After his health began to decline in March 1826, he passed away on July 4, 1826 - exactly fifty years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. He was buried at Monticello, with an inscription on his tombstone that honors him as the author of the Declaration, the Statute for Religious Freedom, and the founder of the University of Virginia.



Fig 2.5.6 Tombstone of Jefferson

### The Declaration of the Rights in France

After the establishment of democracy in America, the French people began calling

for a similar system of governance in their own country. By 1789, the French Revolution had begun, and the king was compelled to make significant concessions to the growing democratic movement. On August 20, 1789, the National Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, which contained many principles directly inspired by the American Declaration of Independence.

### Democratisation of England

In England, the transition to a free society was slower and occurred through more peaceful means. A pivotal moment in English history came in 1215 when King John accepted the Magna Carta. Later, in 1832, under the reign of King William IV, the Parliament passed the Reform Act, which expanded voting rights to British citizens who owned property valued at a minimum of ten pounds. Voting rights continued to expand, and by 1885, all male citizens in England were granted the right to vote. Women gained suffrage in 1928. By the time Queen Victoria's reign ended in 1901, the powers of the monarchy had steadily diminished, with Parliament and the Prime Minister gaining more influence. In this way, the democratic principles outlined by Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence were gradually embraced by British citizens.

## Recap

- ◆ Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence, emphasising freedom and natural rights
- ◆ The document listed grievances against King George and justified the colonies' independence
- ◆ Congress revised and approved the declaration, removing criticism of Britain's slave trade
- ◆ The final document was signed on July 4, 1776, and publicly read on July 8
- ◆ The Declaration inspired public celebrations and revolutionary actions across the colonies
- ◆ France formally recognised American independence in 1778 and provided military support
- ◆ The Articles of Confederation, the first U.S. constitution, was adopted in 1777
- ◆ The U.S. Constitution replaced the Articles in 1787, shaping modern American governance
- ◆ The Bill of Rights, introduced by James Madison, was ratified in 1791
- ◆ Influential figures like Benjamin Rush, Thomas Paine, and Benjamin Franklin contributed to the Bill
- ◆ Paine's *Common Sense* played a key role in advocating independence from Britain
- ◆ Thomas Jefferson later became U.S. President and championed democratic reforms
- ◆ The Declaration influenced the 1789 French *Declaration of the Rights of Man*
- ◆ England gradually democratised, expanding voting rights through peaceful reforms

## Objective Questions

1. Who was tasked with drafting the initial version of the Declaration of Independence?

2. Which philosopher influenced Thomas Jefferson's idea that all people are born with equal rights?
3. In which year was the Declaration of Independence formally signed?
4. Who was the president of the Continental Congress who signed the Declaration first?
5. Which section of Jefferson's draft was removed due to opposition from southern colonies?
6. Which battle marked the end of the conflict between the former colonies and Britain?
7. What was the first constitution of the United States called?
8. Who is credited with proposing the Bill of Rights?
9. Which pamphlet written by Thomas Paine inspired Americans to seek independence?
10. What major document did France adopt in 1789, inspired by the American Declaration of Independence?
11. Which act in England in 1832 extended voting rights to property owners?
12. Who first conceived the notion of independence to the American colonies?

## Answers

1. Thomas Jefferson
2. John Locke
3. 1776
4. John Hancock
5. Denouncement of the slave trade
6. Battle of Yorktown
7. The Articles of Confederation

8. James Madison
9. Common Sense
10. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
11. The Reform Act
12. Benjamin Rush

## Assignments

1. Explain the role of Thomas Jefferson in drafting the Declaration of Independence. How did his ideas reflect the philosophy of John Locke?
2. Discuss the significance of July 4, 1776, in the context of American history. How was the Declaration received by the public?
3. Analyse the impact of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* on the American independence movement. How did it influence public opinion?
4. What were the major changes made to Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration? Why was the section on the slave trade removed?
5. Compare the American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. What similarities and differences can be observed?

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**BLOCK**

# French Revolution

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# The Causes of the French Revolution

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ understand the causes of the French Revolution
- ♦ analyse the role of the Third Estate in the revolution
- ♦ evaluate the significance and lasting impact of the French Revolution
- ♦ examine the role of the French monarchy as a primary cause of the revolution

### Prerequisites

The French Revolution was a defining moment in modern European history, marking the end of absolute monarchy and feudalism in France. Beginning in 1789 and culminating in the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte by the early 1790s, this period saw widespread political and social upheaval. French citizens, driven by frustration with the monarchy's failures - particularly the poor economic policies of Louis XVI - demanded change. King Louis XVI and his wife, Marie Antoinette, were ultimately executed as symbols of the oppressive regime.

Although the revolution did not achieve all its objectives and often descended into periods of violence, it played a crucial role in shaping the modern nation-state and demonstrated the power of popular will. It was largely driven by the middle class and fuelled by discontent with the monarchy's excesses. The revolution introduced the enduring principles of *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*.

A pivotal moment in the revolution occurred on 14th July 1789, when revolutionaries stormed the Bastille, a prison fortress in Paris. The Bastille, seen as a symbol of royal tyranny, was despised by the people, and its fall became a powerful emblem of the revolution. The momentum of this uprising ultimately led to the dismantling of the monarchy and the redefinition of France's political landscape.

## Keywords

Ancien Régime, Estates-General, Third Estate, Financial crisis, Enlightenment, National Assembly, Bastille

## Discussion

### 3.1.1 The Causes of the French Revolution

The French Revolution, which began in 1789, was a watershed moment in world history, dismantling the Ancien Régime and laying the foundations for modern democratic governance. The revolution was driven by a confluence of political, economic, social, and intellectual factors that had been brewing for decades. This unit explores these underlying causes, demonstrating how long-standing grievances, economic distress, and the emergence of new political ideas converged to ignite revolutionary fervour.

#### 3.1.1.1 The Political Structure and the Inefficiency of the Monarchy

France under the Ancien Régime was governed by an absolute monarchy, where the king wielded almost unrestricted power. Louis XVI, though well-meaning, lacked the decisiveness and political acumen required to address the mounting challenges facing the country. The system was deeply hierarchical, with power concentrated in the hands of the monarch and the privileged nobility, leaving little room for political participation by the broader population.

A main grievance was the Estates-General, a legislative assembly that had not been convened since 1614 until its fateful meeting in 1789. The Estates-General was structured into three estates: the clergy (First Estate), the

nobility (Second Estate), and the commoners (Third Estate). Despite comprising nearly 98% of the population, the Third Estate had minimal influence, as voting was conducted by estate rather than by headcount, ensuring the dominance of the privileged classes. This fundamental imbalance bred frustration, as the growing bourgeoisie - prosperous professionals and merchants - sought greater political representation but were systematically excluded.

Furthermore, the monarchy's inability to implement reforms played a critical role in exacerbating tensions. Advisors such as Jacques Necker, Charles Alexandre de Calonne, and Charles Lomenie de Brienne proposed tax reforms to alleviate the national debt, but these were fiercely resisted by the nobility, who were unwilling to forgo their privileges. The king's indecision in enforcing necessary changes further eroded confidence in the monarchy.

#### 3.1.1.2 Economic Struggles and Financial Crisis

France's economic situation had been deteriorating for years, and by the late 18th century, the country was on the verge of financial collapse. A major contributing factor was its involvement in costly wars, including the **Seven Years' War** (1756–1763) and the **American Revolution** (1775–1783). These conflicts drained the treasury, forcing the government to rely on borrowing, which escalated national debt to unsustainable levels.

The tax burden fell disproportionately on the Third Estate, as the nobility and clergy were largely exempt. Commoners were subject to multiple levies, including the *taille* (a land tax), the *gabelle* (a tax on salt), and feudal dues to local lords. This system of taxation was widely perceived as unjust, especially as France's economy was struggling under poor harvests and rising food prices. A series of harsh winters in the 1780s led to widespread crop failures, causing bread prices to soar. Since bread was a staple for the majority of the population, this inflation severely impacted the urban poor, leading to food shortages and unrest.

Furthermore, industrial stagnation and high unemployment compounded the economic distress. France's economic policies, including mercantilist restrictions and guild monopolies, hindered industrial growth, leaving many artisans and labourers in financial hardship. The economic crisis, combined with systemic fiscal mismanagement, created an atmosphere of desperation and discontent that made revolution seem inevitable.

### 3.1.1.3 Social Inequalities and Class Tensions

The rigid social hierarchy of pre-revolutionary France exacerbated resentment among the lower classes. Society was divided into three estates, with stark disparities in wealth, privileges and opportunities.

The First Estate (clergy) and the Second Estate (nobility) enjoyed significant privileges, including tax exemptions and political influence. The nobility occupied high-ranking positions in government and the military, while the clergy controlled vast amounts of land and collected tithes from peasants. Despite their wealth and power, these privileged classes contributed little to the state's financial needs.

In contrast, the Third Estate - comprising peasants, urban workers, and the burgeoning bourgeoisie - bore the brunt of taxation and economic hardship. While peasants struggled under feudal obligations, the bourgeoisie, despite their economic success, were denied political representation and social mobility. This rising middle class, inspired by Enlightenment ideals, began to challenge the legitimacy of a system that excluded them from governance. Their aspirations for merit-based advancement and political participation clashed with the entrenched privileges of the aristocracy, fuelling revolutionary sentiment.

### 3.1.1.4 The Influence of Enlightenment Ideals

The intellectual ferment of the 18th century played a crucial role in shaping revolutionary ideology. The Enlightenment, a movement that emphasised reason, individual rights, and equality, directly challenged the traditional foundations of monarchical rule and divine right.

Philosophers such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu criticised absolutism and advocated for political reform. Rousseau's concept of the "general will" and 'social contract theory' inspired the belief that sovereignty should reside with the people rather than a hereditary monarch. Montesquieu's advocacy of the separation of powers influenced calls for a constitutional government. Voltaire's writings on religious tolerance and freedom of speech resonated with those who opposed the power of the Catholic Church and the censorship imposed by the monarchy.

These ideas were widely disseminated through books, pamphlets, and salons, where intellectuals and political thinkers debated the necessity of reform. The Enlightenment fostered a growing belief that a more just and equitable society was possible, laying the



ideological groundwork for revolutionary demands.

### 3.1.2 The Estates-General and the Outbreak of Revolution

The immediate catalyst for the French Revolution came in 1789 when King Louis XVI, facing a severe financial crisis, was compelled to convene the Estates-General. France had been struggling with mounting debt due to years of lavish spending by the monarchy, costly wars, and a tax system that unfairly burdened the common people while exempting the privileged First and Second Estates - the clergy and nobility. The Estates-General, which had not been called since 1614, was meant to address these financial difficulties, but it also provided a rare opportunity for the Third Estate, which comprised the majority of the population, to voice their long-standing grievances.

However, the structure of the Estates-General was inherently unequal. Each estate had only one vote as a collective body, meaning that despite representing nearly 98% of the French population, the Third Estate could easily be outvoted by the clergy and nobility, who often aligned their interests. Frustrated by their lack of meaningful representation and denied the ability to implement real reforms, members of the Third Estate took a radical step on 17 June 1789 by declaring themselves the National Assembly. This act was a direct challenge to the king's authority and an assertion that sovereignty resided

with the people rather than the monarchy.

Tensions escalated further when Louis XVI, wary of the growing opposition, attempted to block the National Assembly from meeting. In response, its members gathered at a nearby indoor tennis court and took the Tennis court oath on 20 June 1789. They pledged not to disband until they had drafted a constitution that would establish a fairer system of governance. This event marked a turning point, as it symbolised the growing unity and determination of the revolutionaries.

The situation reached a critical point on 14 July 1789, when revolutionaries stormed the Bastille, a fortress-prison in Paris that represented the monarchy's arbitrary power. The storming of the Bastille was both a symbolic and practical act - the revolutionaries sought to seize weapons and ammunition to defend themselves against royal forces. This event is widely considered the official beginning of the French Revolution, as it galvanised widespread support for the revolutionary cause.

In the weeks that followed, revolutionary fervour spread throughout France. The period known as the Great Fear saw peasants across the countryside rising against feudal lords, attacking manors, and burning feudal records that documented their obligations. Meanwhile, urban mobs in Paris and other cities demanded political and economic reforms, setting the stage for a sweeping transformation of French society.

## Recap

- ◆ Causes categorised into social, economic, political, intellectual.
- ◆ Storming of Bastille
- ◆ Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Father of French Revolution.
- ◆ Middle class played a pivotal role
- ◆ Known as the “mother of all revolutions.”
- ◆ Legacy remains significant in the 21st century
- ◆ Monarchy’s failure led to the revolution
- ◆ Promoted liberty, equality, and fraternity
- ◆ Society divided into three estates
- ◆ Third Estate had no privileges
- ◆ Only Third Estate paid taxes
- ◆ 1788 crop failures worsened economic unrest
- ◆ Seven years war and American Revolution worsened French bankruptcy
- ◆ Bourgeoisie resented political exclusion
- ◆ Monarchy lost divine legitimacy
- ◆ Intellectuals inspired social reforms
- ◆ Widespread inequality fuelled dissatisfaction

## Objective Questions

1. Who is considered the father of the French Revolution?
2. Who was the king of France during the French Revolution?
3. What was the Third Estate commonly known as?
4. Who imposed the tax known as the *tithe*?

5. In which year did the French Revolution begin?
6. What was the motto of the French Revolution?
7. Which estate bore the burden of taxation?
8. What event marked the start of the French Revolution?

## Answers

1. Rousseau
2. Louis XVI
3. Commoners
4. The Church
5. 1789
6. Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity
7. The Third Estate
8. The Storming of the Bastille

## Assignments

1. How did the French Revolution inspire other revolutions around the world?
2. How did political anarchy contribute to the outbreak of the French Revolution?
3. What was the role of French society in shaping the course of the French Revolution?
4. Discuss the factors that led to the French Revolution.
5. Explain major events in the course of French Revolution.

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# Enlightenment Thinkers

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ understand the intellectual causes of the French Revolution
- ♦ examine the role of philosophers in shaping revolutionary ideas
- ♦ explore the concept of liberty in relation to the social contract
- ♦ assess the significance of intellectual thought in the French Revolution
- ♦ analyse how the intellectual class contributed to the outbreak of the revolution

### Prerequisites

The 18th century, often called the Age of Enlightenment, was a time of intellectual awakening that reshaped European thought. France played a central role in this movement, as philosophers and scholars began questioning traditional authority and advocating for reason, scientific progress, and social reform. Thinkers of this period rejected the notion that war, poverty, and injustice were divine punishments; instead, they argued that these were consequences of flawed governance and social inequality. Enlightenment ideas emphasised individual rights, the importance of rational governance, and the belief that oppressive rulers could be challenged or even overthrown.

A main aspect of the Enlightenment was its focus on knowledge, progress, and reform. Philosophers, often referred to as philosophes, were not just theorists but also public intellectuals who sought to apply reason to real-world problems. One of their greatest achievements was the publication of the *Encyclopédie*, a collection of knowledge aimed to educating society. These thinkers believed that universal education,

scientific advancements, and technological progress could improve living conditions. They also promoted ideas such as the social contract, which argued that governments derived their legitimacy from the will of the people. These Enlightenment ideals became a driving force behind the French Revolution, shaping its call for liberty, equality, and fraternity and influencing revolutionary movements across the world.

## Keywords

Enlightenment, Reason, Social Contract, Declaration, Liberalism, Utilitarianism, Romanticism

## Discussion

### 3.2.1 Reason and the Enlightenment

The Enlightenment was an intellectual movement that emphasised the power of reason as a means of acquiring knowledge and shaping society. Main principles that defined this period included:

#### Principles of the Enlightenment

- ◆ **The Idea of Progress** – Enlightenment thinkers believed that human society was not static but could evolve and improve through knowledge, innovation, and social reform. Philosophers like Condorcet and Voltaire argued that reason and education would eventually lead to a more just, prosperous, and enlightened world, free from ignorance, superstition, and oppression. This idea was central to the scientific advancements and political reforms of the era.
- ◆ **Rationalism** – At the core of the Enlightenment was the belief in reason as the primary source of knowledge. Rationalism rejected blind adherence to tradition, religious dogma, and superstition. Thinkers like René Descartes and Immanuel Kant emphasised the importance of logical reasoning, critical inquiry, and scientific method in shaping human understanding. This principle challenged the unquestioned authority of monarchs and the Church, advocating instead for policies based on evidence and logic.
- ◆ **Secularism** – The Enlightenment sought to separate religion from politics and governance, advocating for a state that functioned independently of religious influence. Philosophers like Voltaire and John Locke criticised religious intolerance and the control exerted by the Church over political affairs. The movement encouraged freedom of thought, religious tolerance, and the protection of individual rights, laying the groundwork for modern secular states and constitutions.
- ◆ **Naturalism** – Enlightenment thinkers viewed the world through

a scientific and empirical lens, rather than relying on myths or supernatural explanations. Isaac Newton's discoveries in physics and Francis Bacon's emphasis on the scientific method reinforced the idea that natural laws governed the universe. This belief led to technological progress, medical advancements, and economic theories that rejected feudal restrictions in favour of free trade and industrial development.

- ◆ **Humanitarianism**—Many Enlightenment philosophers advocated for social justice, equality, and human dignity. They condemned practices such as slavery, serfdom, and absolute monarchy, calling for reforms that would ensure basic rights for all individuals. Thinkers like Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued for the social contract, which stated that governments should derive their power from the people and exist to serve their interests. This principle influenced the abolitionist movement and democratic governance.
- ◆ **Liberalism**—The Enlightenment laid the foundation for modern liberal democracy, advocating for individual freedoms, limited government, and constitutional rule. John Locke's theories on natural rights-life, liberty, and property-became central to liberal thought. He argued that governments should exist only to protect these rights and could be overthrown if they failed to do so. His ideas directly influenced the American and French Revolutions, as well as the development of democratic constitutions worldwide.
- ◆ **Utilitarianism** – A later

development of Enlightenment thought, utilitarianism argued that the best policies are those that promote the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill advocated for practical governance based on the well-being of the majority, leading to reforms in education, public health, and labour laws. This principle shaped modern ideas of social welfare and ethical policymaking.

- ◆ **Romanticism**—While not strictly an Enlightenment idea, Romanticism emerged as a counterpoint to the emphasis on pure reason. Romantic thinkers valued emotion, nature, individual experience, and artistic expression. While the Enlightenment prioritised scientific discovery and logic, Romanticism highlighted the importance of creativity, intuition, and the human spirit. This movement influenced literature, art, and political nationalism, shaping cultural revolutions in the 19th century.

### 3.2.2 The Enlightenment's Influence on the French Revolution

Though the Enlightenment preceded the French Revolution (1789-1799), its ideas deeply influenced the revolutionaries. Historians widely consider Enlightenment thought to be one of the intellectual causes of the revolution. The period saw the collapse of the feudal order, the overthrow of absolute monarchy, and the establishment of a republic that championed individual rights. Revolutionary ideals such as liberty, equality, and fraternity stemmed directly from the writings of Enlightenment philosophers.

Thinkers such as John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Montesquieu challenged the traditional power of monarchs and questioned the rigid class divisions of the French estates system. Their works, which advocated for popular sovereignty, democratic governance, and the separation of powers, inspired revolutionaries and ordinary citizens alike. Many of these ideas were widely discussed in salons and coffeehouses, where intellectuals gathered to debate contemporary issues. As a result, the French Revolution is often seen as the practical application of Enlightenment thought.

### 3.2.2.1 The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen

The impact of Enlightenment ideals was also evident in The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, adopted by the National Assembly on 26 August 1789. This document directly opposed the authority of Louis XVI, advocating for fundamental human rights protected by law. Inspired by Enlightenment principles, it laid the groundwork for modern concepts of citizenship, democracy, and equality. The declaration is now regarded as one of the earliest documents to articulate the idea of universal human rights, marking a turning point in Western political thought.

### 3.2.3 The Role of Thinkers in the French Revolution

Philosophers played a vital role in shaping the ideological foundations of the French Revolution. Their works inspired the common people to rise against oppression and injustice.

The Enlightenment was a period of intellectual and philosophical ferment in the 17th and 18th centuries that sought to challenge traditional authority and promote ideas of reason, liberty, and progress. Among

the many influential thinkers of this period, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Physiocrats played a crucial role in shaping modern political, social, and economic thought. Their works and ideas not only influenced their contemporaries but also laid the ideological foundations for revolutions, particularly the French Revolution, and modern democratic institutions.

#### 3.2.3.1 Montesquieu (1689–1755) and the Separation of Powers

One of the most significant Enlightenment thinkers, Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, profoundly influenced the development of modern political theory. His most important work, *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), examined various forms of government and argued for the principle of the separation of powers. Montesquieu classified governments into three types: republics, monarchies, and despotisms. He believed that to prevent tyranny and ensure political liberty, power should not be concentrated in a single authority. Instead, he proposed a system of checks and balances among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

Montesquieu's ideas had a significant impact on the framing of modern constitutional governments. His theory of separation of powers became a foundational principle in the U.S. Constitution and influenced political institutions in many democratic nations. Additionally, his critique of absolute monarchy and advocacy for balanced governance resonated with French revolutionaries, who sought to dismantle the oppressive structures of the Ancien Régime.

#### 3.2.3.2 Voltaire (1694–1778) and the Fight for Civil Liberties

François-Marie Arouet, known as Voltaire, was a prolific writer, philosopher, and

advocate for civil liberties. He was a staunch critic of religious intolerance, superstition, and political oppression. Through his writings, particularly *Candide* (1759), *Philosophical Letters* (1733), and *Treatise on Tolerance* (1763), Voltaire promoted freedom of thought, speech, and religious tolerance.

The important aspect of Voltaire's philosophy was his opposition to religious dogma and clerical influence over government. He famously criticised the corruption of the Catholic Church and argued for the separation of church and state. His famous remark, "Écrasez l'infâme" ("Crush the infamous thing"), reflected his disdain for religious tyranny.

Voltaire was also a fierce advocate for justice and individual rights. His numerous letters and essays championed the rights of the wrongfully accused, including his defense of Jean Calas, a Protestant who was unjustly executed. His efforts contributed to later legal reforms in France.

His emphasis on reason, rationality, and human rights greatly influenced Enlightenment thought and provided inspiration for the French Revolution. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789), which emphasised freedom of speech and religious tolerance, reflected many of Voltaire's principles.

### **3.2.3.3 Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) and the Social Contract**

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was one of the most radical and influential philosophers of the Enlightenment. His political philosophy centered on the idea of popular sovereignty and the collective will of the people. In his seminal work, *The Social Contract* (1762), Rousseau argued that legitimate political authority derives from the general will of

the people rather than from divine right or hereditary monarchy. He proposed that individuals enter into a social contract in which they surrender certain personal freedoms in exchange for the protection and benefits of a collective political order.

Unlike Montesquieu, who believed in a balanced system of government, Rousseau was skeptical of representative democracy and instead championed direct democracy, where citizens actively participate in governance. He believed that true freedom lay in obedience to laws created by the general will, ensuring that no individual or group could dominate society.

Rousseau's ideas had a profound impact on revolutionary movements. His emphasis on equality and popular sovereignty resonated with the leaders of the French Revolution, particularly the Jacobins, who sought to establish a more egalitarian society. His influence can also be seen in the writings of Karl Marx and later socialist movements that advocated for collective decision-making and the redistribution of wealth.

### **3.2.3.4 The Physiocrats and Economic Thought**

While Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau primarily focused on political philosophy, the Physiocrats were a group of Enlightenment economists who revolutionised economic thought. Led by François Quesnay and Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, the Physiocrats emphasised the importance of agriculture as the foundation of national wealth. They were among the first to systematically challenge mercantilism, the dominant economic theory of the time, which promoted heavy government intervention in trade.

The Physiocrats introduced the concept of *laissez-faire*, advocating minimal state intervention in economic affairs. They

believed that free trade, low taxation, and reduced government restrictions would lead to economic prosperity. Quesnay's *Tableau Économique* (1758) outlined the flow of wealth in an economy and argued that agricultural production was the true source of economic growth.

Their emphasis on free markets influenced later economic thinkers, particularly Adam Smith, whose *Wealth of Nations* (1776) built upon many Physiocratic principles. The Physiocrats' ideas also had a direct impact on French economic policies, particularly under Turgot, who attempted to implement free-market reforms before the Revolution.

### 3.2.2 The Legacy of Enlightenment Thought

Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, and the

Physiocrats played pivotal roles in shaping modern political and economic thought. Their critiques of absolute monarchy, religious dogma, and economic restrictions helped lay the groundwork for revolutionary movements, particularly the French Revolution.

Montesquieu's advocacy for the separation of powers became a cornerstone of democratic governance, influencing modern constitutions worldwide. Voltaire's emphasis on civil liberties and religious tolerance helped shape modern human rights discourse. Rousseau's theories on popular sovereignty and the general will provide ideological fuel for radical democratic movements. The Physiocrats, by promoting free-market economics, helped establish the foundation for modern capitalist thought.

## Recap

- ♦ Intellectuals fuelled the French Revolution
- ♦ Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu shaped ideas
- ♦ “Man is born free” inspired freedom
- ♦ Rousseau’s *Social Contract* was influential
- ♦ Montesquieu introduced separation of powers
- ♦ Voltaire opposed the Church’s influence
- ♦ Enlightenment spread liberal political thought
- ♦ Liberty, equality, and rights gained prominence

## Objective Questions

1. Who wrote the book *Social Contract*?
2. Who introduced the concept of 'separation of powers'?
3. Which right is considered a natural right?
4. Who advocated for freedom of religion and expression?
5. What was the key political idea of Montesquieu?
6. Which Enlightenment thinker emphasised the "general will"?
7. Which Enlightenment principle challenged state-controlled economies?
8. Which class primarily supported property rights?
9. Which Enlightenment thinker criticised religious dogma?

## Answers

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau
2. Montesquieu
3. Liberty
4. Voltaire
5. Separation of Powers
6. Jean-Jacques Rousseau
7. Economic liberalism
8. Middle-class property owners
9. Voltaire

## Assignments

1. How did Enlightenment thinkers contribute to the French Revolution?
2. Why is Jean-Jacques Rousseau considered the “Father of the French Revolution”?

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# Tennis Court Oath

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the role of the Estates-General in triggering revolutionary events
- ◆ analyse the significance of the Tennis Court Oath as a revolutionary act
- ◆ explain the impact of the storming of the Bastille on the monarchy
- ◆ discuss the effects of paranoia and the 'Great Fear' on rural uprisings

### Prerequisites

By 1789, France was a nation teetering on the edge of collapse. Decades of financial mismanagement, heavy taxation on the common people, and widespread famine had pushed the country to a breaking point. King Louis XVI, an indecisive monarch, found himself caught in a whirlwind of crisis. The state's finances were in ruin, yet the privileged First Estate (the clergy) and Second Estate (the nobility) refused to shoulder the burden of taxation. The pressure mounted, and soon, France's rigid social and political order would be challenged in a way that would alter history forever.

### Keywords

Estates-General, Third Estate, National Assembly, Tennis Court Oath, Mirabeau, Storming of the Bastille, Great Fear

# Discussion

## 3.3.1 Summoning the Estates-General

In a desperate bid to address the financial crisis, Louis XVI convened the Estates-General on 5 May 1789—a rare assembly of representatives from all three social orders. It was the first time this body had met since 1614, and expectations were high. The king, however, made a grave miscalculation: rather than addressing the deep economic and social grievances, he insisted that the Estates-General operate under its traditional voting system, where each estate had one vote.

This system overwhelmingly favoured the clergy and nobility, as they could always outvote the Third Estate (the commoners), despite the fact that the latter represented 98% of France's population. Frustration grew among the Third Estate's representatives, who included lawyers, merchants, and intellectuals deeply influenced by Enlightenment ideals. Figures like Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès, a radical cleric called for an end to aristocratic privilege and demanded greater representation.

### 3.3.1.1 Declaring the National Assembly

As weeks passed, it became increasingly clear that meaningful reform would not come from within the Estates-General. On 17 June 1789, the Third Estate took a decisive step: they declared themselves the National Assembly, proclaiming that they alone represented the will of the French people. This was nothing short of an act of defiance against the king's authority. Two days later, some members of the First Estate (the lower clergy) defected and joined their cause.

The response from the monarchy was swift and hostile. On 20 June 1789, the delegates arrived at their meeting hall only to find the doors locked and guarded by royal soldiers. This was widely seen as an attempt to silence them. Furious but undeterred, they sought an alternative space and gathered in a nearby indoor tennis court in the Palace of Versailles. There, they made a solemn vow.

## 3.3.2 The Tennis Court Oath

Inside the dimly lit hall, with their voices echoing off the walls, 576 representatives of the Third Estate swore an unbreakable oath not to disband until they had drafted a new constitution for France. This declaration, later known as the Tennis Court Oath, was the first formal act of revolution. It was led by figures such as:

- ◆ Jean-Sylvain Bailly—A respected astronomer who presided over the oath.
- ◆ Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès—A radical thinker who played a pivotal role in rallying the Third Estate.
- ◆ Honoré Gabriel Riqueti, Comte de Mirabeau—A fiery orator who declared that the National Assembly would not be removed except by force.

When King Louis XVI heard of this, he attempted to reassert his control. On 23 June, he addressed the assembly, demanding that they disband immediately. Mirabeau, undeterred, famously retorted:

*“Go tell your master that we are here by the will of the people, and that we shall not be expelled except by the force of bayonets..”*

The king hesitated. Instead of using force, he reluctantly ordered the First and Second Estates to join the National Assembly. For the first time in history, all three estates were united under one body, directly challenging the monarchy's authority.

### 3.3.2.1 Rising Tide of Fear and Paranoia

As tensions escalated, fear gripped Paris. Rumours spread that Louis XVI was gathering troops to crush the Assembly. At the same time, bread prices soared, and starvation loomed over the working class. The sense of paranoia grew. The people of Paris believed that an aristocratic conspiracy known as the “aristocratic plot”- was underway, where the nobility would attempt to violently suppress the revolution.

In response, revolutionary leaders like Camille Desmoulins called on the people to take up arms. The paranoia soon turned into action.

### 3.3.2.2 The Storming of the Bastille: The Revolution Ignites

On 14 July 1789, a massive crowd of working-class Parisians stormed the Bastille, a medieval fortress used as a prison and symbol of royal tyranny. Though it housed only seven prisoners, the Bastille's fall was immensely symbolic. It marked the collapse of absolute monarchy's authority.

The attack was brutal. After hours of fighting, the governor of the Bastille, Bernard-René de Launay, was dragged through the streets and killed. His head was paraded around Paris on a pike. The revolution had crossed the point of no return.

### 3.3.2.3 Paranoia Takes Hold: The Great Fear

Following the storming of the Bastille, revolutionary paranoia swept across the French countryside in what became known as the “Great Fear” (*La Grande Peur*). In July and August 1789, rumours spread that the nobility were organising militias to crush the revolution. In response, peasants rose up, attacking manor houses, burning feudal records, and demanding the abolition of feudal privileges.

The monarchy, meanwhile, was paralysed. Louis XVI, shocked by the events unfolding, made a symbolic visit to Paris on 17 July, wearing the revolutionary tricolour cockade but this was seen as too little, too late.

The events of June and July 1789 changed France forever. The Tennis Court Oath demonstrated the power of collective action, while the storming of the Bastille signalled the beginning of the revolution. The old order where monarchy and aristocracy ruled unchallenged was crumbling.

Yet, even as the revolution gained momentum, paranoia and fear continued to shape its course. The distrust between the people and the ruling classes would soon spiral into violence, leading to the abolition of feudalism, the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and eventually the fall of the monarchy itself.

In the coming years, France would see a republic rise, only to fall into the hands of radical leaders, culminating in the Reign of Terror. But in those crucial days of June and July 1789, one thing became clear: the people of France were no longer willing to be silenced. The revolution had begun.

## Recap

- ◆ France on the edge of collapse
- ◆ Estates-General convened, tensions escalated
- ◆ Third Estate forms National Assembly
- ◆ Tennis court oath sparks revolution
- ◆ Storming of Bastille ignites rebellion
- ◆ Great Fear spreads through countryside
- ◆ Monarchy crumbles, revolution gains momentum

## Objective Questions

1. Who is considered the philosophical inspiration behind the French Revolution?
2. Who was the king of France during the French Revolution?
3. What was the name of the royal palace of the French monarchy?
4. What was the Third Estate commonly referred to as?
5. When was the Estates-General last convened before the revolution?
6. What was the Tennis Court Oath?
7. Which major event marked the beginning of the French Revolution?
8. What document outlined the fundamental principles of the revolution?
9. What was the period of extreme violence following the revolution known as?

## Answers

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau
2. King Louis XVI
3. Palace of Versailles
4. The Commoners
5. 5 May 1789
6. A pledge by the Third Estate to draft a new constitution
7. The Storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789
8. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
9. The Reign of Terror (1793–1794)

## Assignments

1. Analyse the significance and impact of the Tennis Court Oath.

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1. Briton, Crane. *Anatomy of Revolutions*, Vintage Publications, 1965.
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# UNIT

## Storming of the Bastille

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ understand the significance of the storming of the Bastille
- ♦ examine the political consequences in Paris after the Bastille's fall
- ♦ analyse the revolution's spread to the countryside
- ♦ evaluate the abolition of feudalism through the August Decrees
- ♦ investigate the impact of the Women's March on Versailles

### Prerequisites

On 14 July 1789, a state prison on the eastern side of Paris, known as the Bastille, was stormed by an enraged and determined crowd. The Bastille, a long-standing symbol of the monarchy's oppressive rule, became the focal point of the people's resentment, marking a pivotal moment in the unfolding revolution.

The Bastille, originally intended as a prison, had come to embody everything the people of France despised about their government. Discontent had been growing since the Third Estate declared itself the National Assembly, leading to widespread unrest in Paris. Tensions escalated further when King Louis XVI dismissed Jacques Necker, the finance minister widely supported by the people. This act was seen as an attempt to suppress reform, igniting violent riots in the capital. On 14 July 1789, a large mob stormed the Bastille, seeking weapons and gunpowder while also demanding the release of prisoners. Commander Bernard-René de Launay, the prison governor, resisted but was ultimately overpowered by the attackers, who were aided by defecting soldiers from the French army. After surrendering, Launay was captured, paraded through the streets, and executed by the mob.

## Keywords

Bastille, Great Fear, August Decrees, Declaration of Rights, Women's March, Civil Constitution, Flight to Varennes, September Massacres

## Discussion

The storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789 marked a pivotal moment in the French Revolution, symbolising the collapse of absolute monarchy and the rise of popular resistance. However, rather than stabilising the country, the event set off a chain reaction of radical political and social changes that would ultimately engulf France in a period of escalating revolutionary violence. From the immediate political consequences in Paris to the rural insurrections of the Great Fear, and from the radical reforms of the National Assembly to the violent suppression of opposition, France underwent a period of unprecedented transformation. This essay traces the sequence of events from the fall of the Bastille to the widespread revolutionary violence that engulfed the nation.

### 3.4.1 Course of the Revolution

The storming of the Bastille, which had been a symbol of royal oppression, caused an immediate political crisis for King Louis XVI. When he learned of the event, he reportedly asked, "Is this a revolt?", to which the Duke of La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt famously responded, "No, Sire, it is a revolution." The fall of the fortress prison was not just a symbolic victory but also a turning point that revealed the monarchy's declining authority.

In response, Paris underwent significant political changes:

- ◆ The Paris Commune was formed on 15 July 1789, replacing the old municipal government with

a revolutionary leadership.

- ◆ The National Guard was established under the command of the moderate aristocrat Marquis de Lafayette, who sought to maintain order while protecting revolutionary gains.
- ◆ King Louis XVI, in an attempt to pacify the revolutionaries, visited Paris on 17 July, wearing the tricolour cockade - a gesture intended to signal his acceptance of the revolution. However, this act failed to restore trust in the monarchy.

At the same time, noble émigrés - aristocrats and royalists began fleeing France, fearing for their safety. Many settled in Austria, Prussia, and Britain, where they plotted against the revolution.

### 3.4.1.1 The Revolution Spreads to the Countryside

While Paris experienced political upheaval, the revolution quickly spread to the countryside, culminating in the Great Fear (*La Grande Peur*) between July and August 1789. Widespread hysteria gripped rural communities as peasants, fearing that the nobility was mobilising mercenaries to suppress the revolution, launched pre-emptive attacks on feudal estates. Manor houses were raided and burned to destroy feudal records and erase debt obligations, while local nobles were often targeted,

sometimes with fatal consequences. Many peasants openly defied the feudal system by refusing to pay dues, directly challenging the long-established social hierarchy. Alarmed by the scale of violence, members of the nobility fled France in what became known as the *émigré exodus*, which intensified in late 1789 and early 1790 as aristocrats sought refuge in neighbouring monarchies.

### **3.4.1.2 The August Decrees and the Abolition of Feudalism (4 August 1789)**

In response to the peasant revolts and growing unrest, the National Assembly convened on 4 August 1789 to address the crisis. In a dramatic session, noble deputies, some out of fear and others out of genuine revolutionary zeal, stood up one by one to renounce their feudal privileges.

The result was the passing of the August Decrees, which:

- ◆ Abolished feudal dues and tithes, freeing peasants from oppressive obligations.
- ◆ Ended noble and clerical privileges, including tax exemptions.
- ◆ Opened government positions to all citizens, breaking the aristocratic monopoly on power.

This effectively dismantled feudalism in France and laid the groundwork for a more egalitarian society.

### **3.4.1.3 The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (26 August 1789)**

Less than a month later, the National Assembly passed the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, inspired by Enlightenment principles and the American

Revolution. This document enshrined key revolutionary ideals, including:

- ◆ Equality before the law (abolishing privileges based on birth).
- ◆ Freedom of speech, press, and religion.
- ◆ The right to participate in government.

Though a landmark in human rights history, the declaration failed to address economic hardships, leading to further unrest.

### **3.4.1.4 The Women's March on Versailles (5–6 October 1789):**

By October 1789, France was in the grip of a severe economic crisis, with food shortages and rising bread prices pushing the population to the brink of starvation. The suffering was felt most acutely by the working - class women of Paris, who struggled daily to feed their families. On 5 October, frustration boiled over into action. A crowd of thousands, predominantly women - market vendors, laundresses, and poor labourers - gathered at the city hall, demanding bread and immediate relief from the government. Their anger quickly turned towards the monarchy, which they blamed for the crisis.

What began as a protest for food soon transformed into a march on Versailles, the lavish royal residence that stood in stark contrast to the poverty of the people. Armed with makeshift weapons - knives, pikes, and even cannons - some 7,000 women, accompanied by National Guardsmen, trudged through the rain to confront King Louis XVI. Upon arrival, they stormed the palace gates, demanding an audience with the king and direct action to address their hunger.

The situation escalated overnight. By the

morning of 6 October, some of the more militant marchers had broken into the palace, breaching the Queen's quarters and nearly capturing Marie Antoinette, who narrowly escaped through a secret passage. Faced with overwhelming pressure, Louis XVI had no choice but to comply with the people's demands. He agreed to move his court to Paris, effectively becoming a prisoner of the revolutionaries. He and his family were relocated to the Tuileries Palace, where they would remain under constant surveillance. This moment signified the end of absolute monarchy, as the king's power was now firmly in the hands of the revolutionaries.

### 3.4.1.5 The Civil Constitution of the Clergy (1790)

Even as political change swept through France, one of the most contentious reforms of the early revolution concerned the Catholic Church. Historically, the Church had been one of the pillars of the *ancien régime*, wielding immense wealth and influence. In July 1790, the National Assembly passed the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, a radical law that sought to bring the Church under state control.

**The law had two provisions:**

- ◆ **The nationalisation of Church property:** The government seized vast church lands to alleviate the financial crisis, dealing a severe blow to the clergy's economic power.
- ◆ **The oath of loyalty:** Clergy were required to swear allegiance to the revolution and the new constitutional order, effectively making them state employees.

The response was deeply polarising. Many devout Catholics saw the measure as a direct attack on their faith, while revolutionary leaders viewed it as a necessary step in

breaking the Church's grip on French politics. A large number of clergy refused to take the oath, splitting the French Church into "constitutional priests" who supported the revolution and "refractory priests" who remained loyal to the Pope.

This division ignited resistance, particularly in rural areas, where many people remained deeply religious. Over time, it would contribute to counter-revolutionary uprisings, most notably the Vendée Rebellion (1793), in which entire regions rose against the revolutionary government in defence of their faith and monarchy.

### 3.4.1.6 The Flight to Varennes (June 1791)

By 1791, Louis XVI had become increasingly disillusioned with the revolution. Stripped of his absolute power, under constant surveillance, and watching France spiral into chaos, he and his advisors secretly plotted an escape. The plan was audacious—he and his family would disguise themselves as commoners and flee to Montmédy, a royalist stronghold near the Austrian border, where they would rally counter-revolutionary forces.

On the night of 20–21 June 1791, the royal family slipped out of the Tuileries Palace in a heavy, gilded carriage. However, their escape was poorly executed. Slowed by their cumbersome vehicle and recognised along the way, they were finally stopped in the small town of Varennes by revolutionaries who identified the king from his image on a coin. The family was captured and forcibly returned to Paris, where crowds lined the streets in stony silence – a far more ominous reception than any jeering mob.

The failed escape shattered any remaining illusion that Louis XVI was willing to work with the revolution. To the people, it was now clear that their king was a traitor who had abandoned them to conspire with foreign

monarchs. Calls for the abolition of the monarchy intensified, setting the stage for its eventual downfall.

### **3.4.1.7 The Declaration of War and the Rise of Radicalism (April–August 1792)**

Amidst growing instability, the revolutionary government declared war on Austria in April 1792, convinced that war would unite the country and expose foreign threats. However, the early phases of the war went disastrously. French armies were ill-prepared, morale was low, and suspicions ran high that royalist officers were sabotaging the revolution from within.

Tensions boiled over on 10 August 1792, when an armed mob stormed the Tuileries Palace. The Swiss Guards, loyal to the king, attempted to defend it, but they were overwhelmed, and over 600 of them were massacred. The royal family barely escaped with their lives, seeking refuge in the Legislative Assembly, but their fate was sealed. On 13 August, Louis XVI was officially arrested, marking the definitive end of monarchy in France.

### **3.4.1.8 The September Massacres (1792)**

With France on the brink of invasion and royalist plots suspected at every turn, revolutionary paranoia reached a fever pitch in early September 1792. As Prussian forces advanced toward Paris, fear spread that imprisoned royalists and counter-revolutionaries would rise up and betray the revolution from within.

In response, radical revolutionaries, including members of the Jacobins and sans-culottes, took matters into their own

hands. Between 2–6 September, mobs stormed Parisian prisons and executed thousands of inmates, many of whom were priests, nobles, and suspected royalist sympathizers. The killings were brutal—prisoners were hacked to death with swords, bludgeoned, and mutilated in a frenzy of revolutionary justice.

The September Massacres horrified moderates, but among the radical factions, they were seen as a necessary purge to rid the revolution of its enemies. This marked a turning point in the French Revolution, as it demonstrated that violence and terror had become acceptable tools of governance. The revolution was no longer simply about reform—it had become a struggle for survival, in which perceived enemies had to be eliminated.

The period following the fall of the Bastille had begun with idealistic dreams of liberty, equality, and fraternity. However, as the revolution progressed, events took an increasingly violent turn. The Women's March on Versailles forced the monarchy to submit to the will of the people, while the Civil Constitution of the Clergy divided the nation along religious lines. The failed Flight to Varennes shattered trust in the king and led to his eventual imprisonment. The outbreak of war in 1792 further fuelled radicalism, culminating in the storming of the Tuileries and the September Massacres.

Each of these events pushed France further into a revolutionary spiral, where moderation was abandoned in favour of extreme measures. What had begun as a movement for constitutional reform was now moving toward the total overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic—one that would soon be drenched in the blood of its enemies.

## Recap

- ◆ Storming of the Bastille ignites revolution
- ◆ Peasants revolt during the Great Fear
- ◆ August Decrees abolish feudal privileges
- ◆ Rights of Man declares equality and freedom
- ◆ The Women's March forces the king to flee to Paris
- ◆ The Civil Constitution divides Church and state
- ◆ King's failed escape fuels distrust
- ◆ September Massacres mark radical violence

## Objective Questions

1. On what date was the Bastille stormed?
2. Which decree ended feudal obligations in France?
3. Who was appointed leader of the National Guard?
4. In which town was Louis XVI apprehended?
5. What law brought the Church under state authority?
6. Against which country did revolutionary France first go to war?
7. Which royal residence did the women of Paris invade?
8. What series of killings targeted suspected royalists in 1792?

## Answers

1. 14 July 1789
2. August Decrees

3. Marquis de Lafayette
4. Varennes
5. Civil Constitution of the Clergy
6. Habsburg (Austria)
7. Versailles Palace
8. September Massacres (1792)

## Assignments

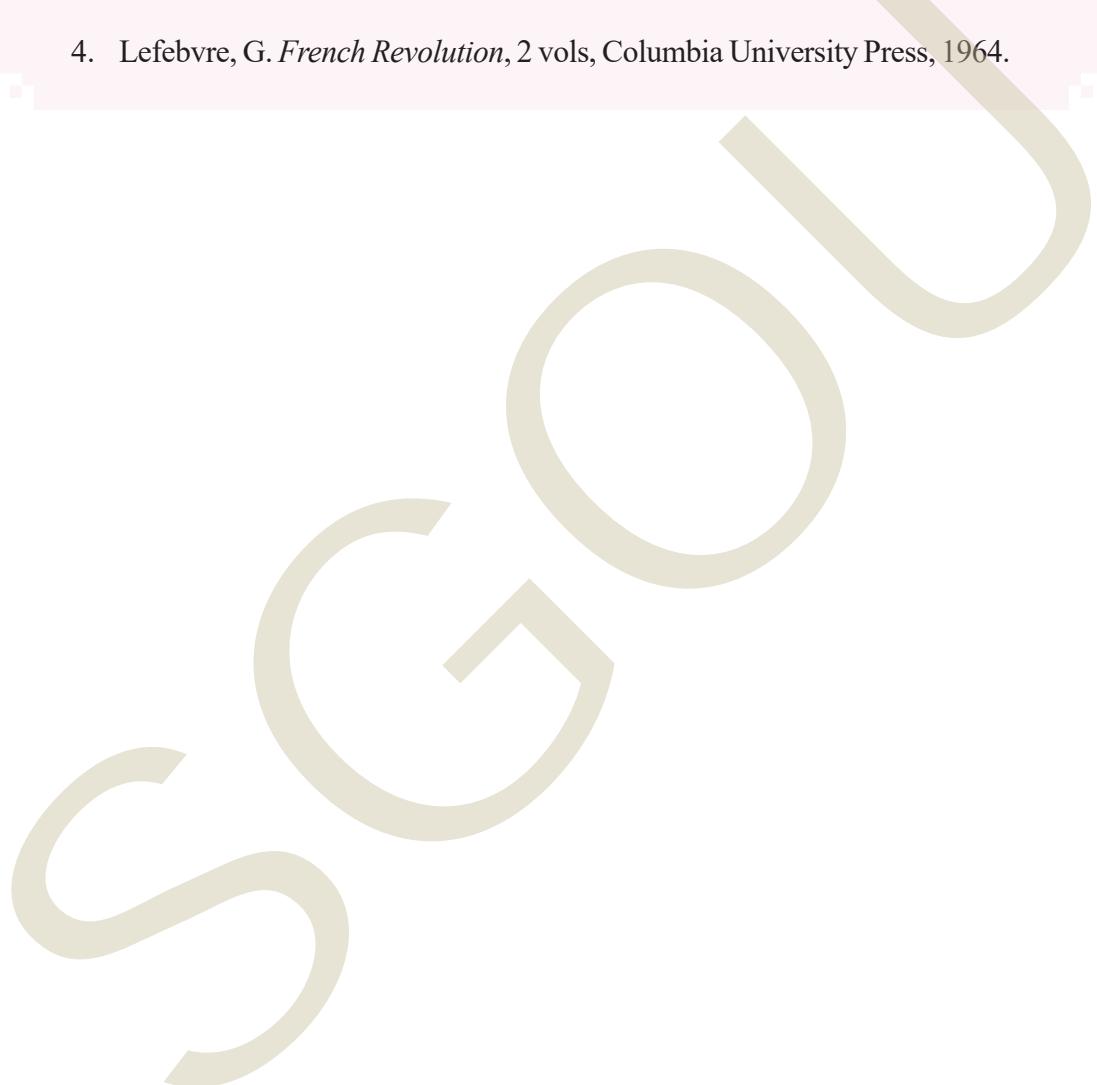
1. Analyse the role of women in the early French Revolution, particularly during the Women's March on Versailles.
2. Discuss the impact of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy on revolutionary France.
3. Evaluate the significance of the Flight to Varennes in the downfall of the monarchy.
4. How did the September Massacres contribute to the radicalisation of the revolution?

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# Declaration of the Rights of Man

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the significance of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and its legacy
- ◆ examine the political context and events of the Reign of Terror
- ◆ analyse the features and policies of the Terror
- ◆ evaluate the impact of the Thermidorian Reaction and Napoleon's rise

### Prerequisites

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, adopted by the National Assembly between 20–26 August 1789, was a key document of the French Revolution. It outlined fundamental human rights and served as the preamble to the Constitution of 1791, later influencing the declarations of 1793 and 1795.

The document was influenced by Enlightenment thinkers like Montesquieu (separation of powers) and Rousseau (general will), as well as the Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776) and Dutch Patriot manifestos. It directly challenged the monarchy, replacing aristocratic privileges with legal equality and judicial safeguards.

Although initially meant to protect civil liberties within a constitutional monarchy, the Declaration's principles—especially Article 1—later inspired calls for political and social democracy. Historian Jules Michelet called it “the credo of the new age.”

## Keywords

Popular Sovereignty, Law of Suspects, Cult of Reason, Levée en Masse, Thermidorian Reaction

## Discussion

### 3.5.1 The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789): A Lasting Legacy

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, adopted by the National Assembly of France on 26 August 1789, was a defining document of the French Revolution and a milestone in the history of human rights. Serving as the preamble to the Constitution of 1791, it outlined fundamental principles of liberty, equality, and justice, shaping modern democratic thought.

The Declaration was deeply rooted in Enlightenment ideals and drew inspiration from thinkers like Montesquieu, who advocated the separation of powers, and Rousseau, who championed the social contract and the concept of the general will. It was also influenced by foreign documents, particularly the American Declaration of Independence (1776) and the Virginia Declaration of Rights, drafted by George Mason. General Lafayette, with input from Thomas Jefferson, played a key role in drafting the Declaration, reflecting the close intellectual ties between revolutionary France and the newly formed United States.

#### 3.5.1.1 Core Principles

The Declaration proclaimed that “men are born and remain free and equal in rights” (Article 1), establishing the principles of liberty, private property, security, and

resistance to oppression (Article 2). It also enshrined equality before the law (Article 6), protection against arbitrary arrest (Article 7), freedom of religion (Article 10), and freedom of speech (Article 11). However, property rights (Article 17) were given special protection, reflecting the interests of the bourgeois elite who dominated the Assembly.

The document also challenged the monarchy and the old feudal privileges of the ancien régime, replacing them with legal equality and judicial safeguards. It affirmed popular sovereignty (Article 3), declaring that all political authority originates from the nation rather than the king. This represented a direct break from the divine right of kings and paved the way for constitutional government.

#### 3.5.1.2 Limitations and Exclusions

While the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen set forth noble ideals of liberty and equality, its promises were not fully realised, and France soon descended into chaos. The revolutionary fervour that had sparked hopes for a new social order quickly gave way to violent conflict. As economic hardship, political divisions, and external threats mounted, the Jacobins, under Robespierre’s leadership, took drastic measures to defend the Revolution. The Reign of Terror became the grim response to perceived enemies of the state, where revolutionary ideals were upheld at the cost

of countless lives, exposing contradictions within the Revolution.

Despite its progressive ideals, the Declaration had significant limitations. Political rights were granted only to “active citizens,” a category limited to men over 25 who paid taxes equivalent to three days’ wages. This excluded women, servants, the poor, and enslaved people. The denial of women’s rights led Olympe de Gouges to write the *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen* (1791), challenging the Revolution’s failure to extend equality to women. Similarly, the Declaration did not abolish slavery, despite advocacy from groups like *Les Amis des Noirs*. However, its rhetoric inspired the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), which led to Haiti’s independence and the first successful slave revolt in the New World.

By early 1793, France was embroiled in multiple crises that threatened the Republic’s survival. Internal economic hardship, food shortages, and uprisings, particularly in western regions like the Vendée, pitted royalists, conservative Catholics, and peasants against the government. Externally, the execution of King Louis XVI in January 1793 prompted the formation of the First Coalition, with European powers intent on destroying the French Republic, placing France at war on multiple fronts.

### 3.5.2 The Reign of Terror

The Reign of Terror (1793–1794) was one of the most radical and violent phases of the French Revolution. It was marked by mass executions, political purges, and strict government control, all carried out in the name of protecting the Revolution from its enemies. Led by the Jacobins, with Maximilien Robespierre as their most prominent figure, the period saw thousands of people guillotined, including King Louis XVI, Queen Marie Antoinette, and many leading revolutionaries.

Within the government, the revolutionaries themselves were divided. The two main factions, the moderate Girondins and the radical Jacobins, were locked in a bitter struggle for power. The Jacobins, led by Robespierre, saw themselves as the true defenders of the Revolution. They believed that only extreme measures could save France from internal traitors and external enemies.

In June 1793, the Jacobins, supported by the Parisian mob, arrested and expelled the Girondins from the National Convention (France’s governing body). This left the Jacobins in complete control. Robespierre and his allies quickly moved to consolidate their power, arguing that terror was necessary to protect the Revolution.

To enforce their rule, they created the Committee of Public Safety, a powerful governing body that had almost unlimited authority. In September 1793, they passed the Law of Suspects, which greatly expanded the definition of “enemies of the Revolution.” Almost anyone could be arrested and executed on vague charges of disloyalty. The Revolutionary Tribunal, a special court, conducted mass trials, often sentencing people to death with little or no evidence.

#### 3.5.2.1 Features of the Reign of Terror

##### Mass Executions and the Guillotine

The guillotine became the most feared symbol of the Terror. It was used to execute thousands of people, including nobles, priests, former revolutionaries, and even ordinary citizens accused of treason. By mid-1794, paranoia gripped France, and even Jacobins were being targeted. Anyone who questioned Robespierre’s leadership risked execution.

##### Dechristianisation Campaign

The radical revolutionaries viewed the Catholic Church as an enemy of the Republic.

They launched an aggressive campaign to remove religious influence from society. Churches were closed, priests were forced to renounce their faith, and religious symbols were destroyed. A new secular belief system, the Cult of Reason, was introduced, replacing Christian festivals with revolutionary celebrations. Even the traditional calendar was changed to remove religious references.

### **Economic Controls and Social Policies**

The government introduced strict economic policies to control inflation and ensure food supplies. The General Maximum Law set fixed prices for essential goods, but these controls often failed. Food shortages persisted, leading to riots and unrest.

The Jacobins also attempted to promote equality. They abolished feudal privileges, redistributed land, and encouraged citizens to address each other as “Citizen” instead of using noble titles. However, these reforms were overshadowed by the violence of the Terror.

### **The *Levée en Masse* and Military Mobilisation**

With France at war, the government needed soldiers. In August 1793, they introduced the *Levée en Masse*, a policy that required all able-bodied men to join the army. This transformed France into a highly militarised society and helped the revolutionary armies push back against European forces.

### **3.5.2.2 The Fall of Robespierre and the End of the Terror**

As Robespierre’s power grew, so did opposition to his rule. Many revolutionaries feared that they would be next to face the guillotine. In July 1794, Robespierre gave a speech in which he hinted that more purges were necessary. This alarmed members of the National Convention, who feared for their lives.

On 27 July 1794 (9 Thermidor, Year II), Robespierre was arrested along with his closest allies. The next day, he was guillotined, marking the end of the Reign of Terror.

### **3.5.3 The Thermidorian Reaction and the Rise of Napoleon**

With the fall of Robespierre, the French Revolution entered a new phase of moderation, known as the Thermidorian Reaction. The extreme policies of the Jacobins, who had governed during the Reign of Terror, were swiftly dismantled. The Committee of Public Safety, once the powerful force behind the radical government, lost its authority, and the oppressive laws of the Terror were repealed. Many former Jacobins, once heroes of the revolution, found themselves arrested or executed as the pendulum swung towards moderation. The brutal violence of the previous years came to an abrupt halt, though the political landscape remained volatile.

In 1795, a new government called the Directory was established, but it struggled to maintain control. While it was intended to stabilise France after the chaos of the Terror, the Directory was plagued by corruption, inefficiency, and political instability. The country’s economic woes continued, with rampant inflation, food shortages, and unrest in the streets. The Directory’s inability to address these issues left the nation vulnerable to further upheaval.

Amid this turmoil, a young general named Napoleon Bonaparte began to rise to prominence. His brilliant military campaigns in Italy between 1796 and 1797 earned him the admiration of the French people, and he became a national hero. As the Directory weakened, Napoleon saw his opportunity. In November 1799, he staged a *coup d'état*, seizing control of the government. On 9 November (18 Brumaire, Year VIII), he

overthrew the Directory and established a new regime—the Consulate—declaring himself First Consul. This marked the end of

the French Revolution and the beginning of Napoleon's rule, leading France into a new era of authoritarian governance.

## Recap

- ◆ The Declaration established fundamental human rights
- ◆ The Reign of Terror saw mass executions
- ◆ The guillotine symbolised justice, fear, and excess
- ◆ Dechristianisation suppressed religion and promoted secularism
- ◆ The Thermidorian Reaction ended Robespierre's rule
- ◆ The Directory was weak and highly corrupt
- ◆ Napoleon's victories led to his rise of nationalism in Europe

## Objective Questions

1. When was the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen adopted?
2. Which Enlightenment thinkers influenced the Declaration of the Rights of man and of the citizen?
3. What law expanded the definition of “enemies of the Revolution” during the Reign of Terror?
4. Who led the Committee of Public Safety during the Reign of Terror?
5. What was the purpose of the Levée en Masse?
6. What event marked the fall of Robespierre?
7. When did Napoleon stage his coup d'état?

## Answers

1. 26 August 1789
2. Montesquieu and Rousseau
3. The Law of Suspects (1793)
4. Maximilien Robespierre
5. Mass military conscription for national defense
6. His arrest and execution on 28 July 1794
7. 9 November 1799

## Assignments

1. How did the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen reflect Enlightenment ideals, and what were some of its core principles?
2. What were the key features of the Reign of Terror, and how did the policies implemented during this period impact French society?
3. Explain the Thermidorian Reaction and how it paved the way for the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. What were the challenges faced by the Directory before Napoleon's coup?

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**BLOCK**

# **Colonial Expansion**

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# Colonialism

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the main features of colonialism
- ◆ understand the nature and causes of colonialism
- ◆ identify the different types of colonialism
- ◆ analyse the impacts of colonialism

### Prerequisites

Colonialism has been practised since antiquity by empires such as Ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt, and Phoenicia. From around 1550 BCE onwards, these civilisations expanded their borders into surrounding and non-contiguous territories, establishing colonies that exploited the resources - both material and human - of the subjugated populations to enhance their own power.

Modern colonialism began during the Age of Discovery in the 15th century. In 1415, Portuguese explorers captured Ceuta, a coastal town in North Africa, marking the start of an empire that would endure until 1999. The Portuguese soon expanded to islands such as Madeira and Cape Verde. In response, Spain also embarked on exploration. In 1492, Christopher Columbus, seeking a western route to India and China, instead arrived in the Bahamas, initiating Spanish colonial expansion. Spain and Portugal, competing for dominance, conquered vast indigenous territories across the Americas, Africa, India, and Asia.

England, the Netherlands, France, and later Germany entered the race for overseas empires, often challenging Spanish and Portuguese claims. While European colonies in the Americas saw widespread independence movements in the 18th and 19th centuries - beginning with the American Revolution (1776) and the Haitian Revolution

(1791)- European powers retained their colonial grip in Africa and Asia.

From the 1880s, European nations intensified their scramble for Africa, seeking control over natural resources and strategic territories. This period of aggressive expansion persisted until the global wave of decolonisation, which began after the First World War and gained momentum following the Second World War, leading to the dismantling of most European colonial empires by 1975.

## Keywords

Colonialism, Imperialism, Exploitation, Neocolonialism, Decolonisation

## Discussion

### 4.1.1 Definition and Impact of Colonialism

Colonialism refers to the practice of a nation exerting full or partial political control over another territory, often through settlement, with the aim of exploiting its resources and economy. Closely linked to imperialism, colonialism has historically been a tool for expanding influence and power. By the early 20th century, European powers had colonised vast regions across all inhabited continents.

While colonialism led to economic integration and infrastructural development in some regions, its overall impact was largely detrimental. Colonising powers imposed their language, culture, and political systems on indigenous populations, often through coercion. The primary objective was economic gain, with colonised territories serving as sources of raw materials and markets for European industries.

The industrial revolution intensified colonial expansion, as European nations sought new markets and resources.

Although some regions, like Singapore, credit colonial rule for economic growth and administrative structures, many colonies suffered exploitation, land dispossession, forced labour, and cultural erosion. Colonial governments imposed harsh laws and taxes, leading to widespread suffering.

The Scramble for Africa (1880–1900) epitomised the aggressive nature of colonialism, with European powers dividing and controlling almost the entire continent. Today, Ethiopia and Liberia are considered the only African nations to have largely avoided European colonisation. The legacy of colonialism remains deeply embedded in global economic and political structures, shaping contemporary inequalities and conflicts. Despite formal decolonisation, traces of colonial influence persist in various forms, raising questions about its lasting consequences.

### 4.1.1.2 Imperialism and Colonialism

While the terms colonialism and imperialism are often used interchangeably, they have distinct meanings. Colonialism

refers to the direct control and occupation of one country by another, typically involving settlement and resource exploitation. Imperialism, on the other hand, is the broader political and economic ideology that drives such control, which may or may not involve physical occupation. In essence, colonialism serves as an instrument of imperialism.

Both systems involve domination and subjugation, with economic profit and military advantage as key motivations. However, while colonialism necessitates a physical presence, imperialism can manifest through indirect control, such as economic dependency or political manipulation. For example, many African nations under European rule in the 19th century experienced imperialism without large-scale settlement, whereas countries like Australia, New Zealand, and the United States were shaped by settler colonialism.

## 4.1.2 Impacts of Colonialism

### 4.1.2.1 Columbian Exchange

The Columbian Exchange was a transformative process that reshaped global history by facilitating the movement of plants, animals, culture, human populations, technology, and ideas between the New World (Americas) and the Old World (Eurasia and Africa) during the 15th and 16th centuries. This exchange was an unintended consequence of European colonisation and transoceanic trade.

European explorers and settlers introduced crops such as wheat, barley, and sugarcane to the Americas, significantly altering agricultural practices. Conversely, American crops like maize (corn), potatoes, tomatoes, and cacao were transported to Europe, leading to population growth and economic transformations. For instance, the introduction of the potato to Ireland led to a rapid increase in food production, sustaining larger populations, while cacao became a

luxury commodity in European markets.

The exchange also included livestock; horses, cattle, and pigs, which were previously absent in the Americas, revolutionised indigenous ways of life. Horses, for example, were rapidly adopted by Native American tribes, such as the Comanche and Lakota, who integrated them into hunting and warfare strategies. Meanwhile, European colonisers encountered new animals like turkeys, llamas, and guinea pigs, which they brought back to Europe.

### 4.1.2.2 Slave Trade

To fully exploit the resources of their new colonies, European powers required a large and steady labour force. Initially, Spanish and Portuguese settlers attempted to enslave indigenous populations, forcing them into brutal labour systems such as the encomienda system in Spanish America. However, due to overwork, harsh conditions, and diseases introduced by Europeans, native populations suffered catastrophic declines, in some cases by as much as 90% within a few decades.

As a result, Europeans turned to the transatlantic slave trade, forcibly bringing millions of Africans to the Americas. African slaves were transported via the Middle Passage, enduring horrific conditions aboard ships. Many were sent to plantations in Brazil, the Caribbean, and the American South, where they laboured under extreme conditions to produce sugar, tobacco, and cotton - cash crops that fuelled European economies. The legacy of the transatlantic slave trade persisted for centuries, shaping racial hierarchies and social structures in the Americas.

### 4.1.2.3 Boost to Mercantilism

Mercantilism, an economic system based on accumulating wealth through controlled

trade and colonial expansion, was both a cause and an effect of colonialism. European nations, particularly Spain, Portugal, Britain, and France, established colonies primarily to extract valuable resources and monopolise trade.

The flow of wealth from colonies reinforced mercantilist policies, such as the British Navigation Acts, which restricted colonial trade to benefit the mother country. Colonies supplied raw materials like gold and silver from Latin America, sugar from the Caribbean, and cotton from North America, which were processed and manufactured in Europe before being sold at a profit. The immense wealth extracted from colonies allowed European economies to grow, funded military expansion, and encouraged further conquests.

#### 4.1.2.4 Military Innovation

Colonial conquests were often facilitated by superior military technology and tactics, which gave European powers significant advantages over indigenous forces. One of the most notable examples is the Spanish conquest of the Aztec and Inca Empires.

- ◆ Spanish conquistadors like Hernán Cortés and Francisco Pizarro leveraged firearms, steel weapons, and cavalry to defeat numerically superior indigenous armies that relied on wooden clubs and obsidian blades.
- ◆ The use of cannons and muskets provided Europeans with a decisive edge in battles, while indigenous warriors, who had never encountered gunpowder weapons before, were often unprepared for their devastating effects.
- ◆ In North America, European settlers employed advanced fortifications and naval support

to defend colonies and launch attacks against indigenous communities.

Military innovation was not limited to European powers. The Greeks, for example, developed the phalanx system, in which tightly packed infantry units used overlapping shields for collective defense while advancing. Similarly, the Ottomans' use of Janissaries and gunpowder technology reshaped warfare in the 16th century.

#### 4.1.2.5 Introduced Diseases

Perhaps the most devastating consequence of colonial encounters was the spread of infectious diseases to populations with no prior exposure or immunity. The introduction of diseases such as smallpox, measles, influenza, and yellow fever led to catastrophic declines in indigenous populations.

- ◆ The smallpox epidemic of 1520 played a critical role in the fall of the Aztec Empire. When Spanish forces, led by Hernán Cortés, arrived in Mexico, they inadvertently introduced the disease, which spread rapidly among the Aztecs, killing nearly half the population, including Emperor Cuitláhuac.
- ◆ The Inca Empire suffered a similar fate, as smallpox weakened the ruling elite, causing political instability that allowed Francisco Pizarro's forces to conquer the empire with relative ease.
- ◆ In North America, diseases wiped out entire communities of Algonquian and Iroquois tribes before European settlers even made direct contact. The loss of large segments of indigenous populations facilitated European colonisation, as depopulated lands became easier to control.

### 4.1.3 Types of Colonialism

Colonialism can be classified into five major types: settler colonialism, exploitation colonialism, plantation colonialism, surrogate colonialism, and internal colonialism. Each form reflects different objectives and methods of domination.

#### 4.1.3.1 Settler Colonialism

The most common form of colonialism, settler colonialism, involves the migration of large populations from the colonising country to establish permanent settlements. Colonists often remained subjects of their homeland while exploiting resources and displacing or assimilating indigenous populations. Supported by imperial governments, these settlements usually endured unless wiped out by famine or disease.

A prominent example is the European settlement in North America, beginning with the Spanish arrival in 1492. British colonisation followed in the 17th century, with the establishment of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607 and subsequent migrations driven by religious freedom and economic opportunity. Settler colonialism often led to the marginalisation, enslavement, and extermination of indigenous populations, as seen in the decimation of Native Americans due to violence and diseases like smallpox.

Similarly, the Dutch, German, and French colonisation of South Africa led to the emergence of the Afrikaners, a group that remains a significant demographic in modern South Africa despite the oppressive apartheid system historically associated with them.

#### 4.1.3.2 Exploitation Colonialism

Unlike settler colonialism, exploitation colonialism focused on economic gain rather than large-scale migration. Colonial powers used indigenous labour and resources to

enrich the mother country while maintaining minimal settlement.

One of the most brutal examples was Belgium's colonisation of the Congo in the late 19th century under King Leopold II. The indigenous population was subjected to forced labour to extract ivory and rubber, leading to millions of deaths from starvation, disease, and execution for failing to meet work quotas. Even after independence in 1960, the Congo remained politically unstable and economically devastated due to the lasting effects of exploitation colonialism.

By contrast, settler colonies like the United States experienced better post-colonial outcomes, as their institutions and economies were built for long-term settlement rather than resource extraction.

#### 4.1.3.3 Plantation Colonialism

An early form of colonialism, plantation colonialism involved the establishment of large-scale agricultural enterprises focused on cash crops like tobacco, sugar, and cotton. Labour was typically provided by enslaved or indentured workers.

For example, the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia, became an economic success by the late 17th century, exporting over 20,000 tons of tobacco annually to England. Similar models were adopted in South Carolina and Georgia, where cotton became a primary export commodity.

Beyond economic motives, plantation colonies often aimed to impose Western culture and religion on indigenous communities, as seen in the Plymouth Colony (1620), which provided a haven for Puritans while also functioning as an agricultural settlement.

#### 4.1.3.4 Surrogate Colonialism

In surrogate colonialism, a foreign power

supports the settlement of a non-native group within a territory occupied by an indigenous population. This often occurs through financial aid, diplomatic backing, or military assistance.

For example Zionist Jewish settlement in Palestine, which was encouraged by the British Empire and led to the Balfour Declaration of 1917. The declaration facilitated Jewish migration and settlement in Palestine, laying the foundation for ongoing geopolitical conflicts in the region.

#### 4.1.3.5 Internal Colonialism

Unlike traditional colonialism, internal colonialism refers to the oppression and economic exploitation of marginalised ethnic or racial groups within a nation.

For instance, after the Mexican-American War (1846–1848), Mexicans living in newly annexed U.S. territories found themselves subjects of the United States without equal rights. Many historians describe the economic and social marginalisation of Chicanx people as a form of internal colonialism, highlighting the ongoing structural inequalities they face.

#### 4.1.4 Does Colonialism Still Exist?

Though formal colonialism has largely ended, over 2 million people in 17 non-self-governing territories remain under the authority of former colonial powers, as recognised by the United Nations. These territories, including Turks and Caicos Islands, lack full sovereignty and remain dependent on former colonisers.

For example, in 2009, the British government suspended the local government of the Turks and Caicos Islands following reports of corruption, imposing direct rule and removing the constitutional right to a jury trial. While Britain defended its actions

as necessary for restoring governance, critics labelled it a *coup d'état* and a continuation of colonial rule.

#### 4.1.4.1 Neocolonialism: The Modern Face of Colonialism

Neocolonialism refers to the indirect control exerted by developed nations over less-developed countries, often through economic, political, and cultural means, rather than direct occupation. This form of dominance allows powerful countries to influence the policies and economies of weaker states, perpetuating a cycle of dependency and exploitation.

##### Economic Influence

One of the primary mechanisms of neocolonialism is economic dominance. Developed nations often establish trade agreements that disproportionately benefit them, leaving developing countries reliant on exporting raw materials while importing finished goods. This trade imbalance hinders the economic growth of the less-developed nations and keeps them dependent on the economic policies of the more powerful countries.

##### Political Manipulation

Neocolonialism also manifests through political influence, where powerful countries support specific political regimes or movements that align with their interests. This support can include financial aid, military assistance, or diplomatic backing, often leading to the installation of puppet governments that serve the interests of the more powerful nation rather than the local population.

##### Cultural Domination

Culturally, neocolonialism is evident in the spread of media, language, and consumer products from developed nations, which

can overshadow and diminish indigenous cultures. The global dominance of Western media and entertainment, for example, can lead to the erosion of local traditions and languages, as people adopt foreign cultural norms and values.

### Contemporary Examples

A modern example of neocolonialism is China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Through the BRI, China invests in infrastructure projects across developing countries, often funding them with loans that the recipient nations struggle to repay. This debt dependency can lead to increased Chinese influence over the political and economic decisions of these countries, effectively creating a new form of colonial relationship.

### Global Perspective

Former United Nations General Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has emphasised the importance of eradicating colonialism, stating that "colonialism has no place in today's world." He advocates for the self-determination of all peoples, highlighting the ongoing need to address the legacies of colonialism and prevent new forms of domination.

In summary, while traditional colonialism has largely ended, neocolonialism persists through various indirect means, maintaining a system where developed nations continue to exert significant influence over developing countries. Recognising and addressing these dynamics is crucial for fostering genuine independence and equality in the global community.



## Recap

- ◆ Colonialism is the control of one power over another culture
- ◆ It involves establishing colonies for economic dominance
- ◆ Modern colonialism began during the Age of Discovery
- ◆ Colonisers impose their culture, language, and religion
- ◆ Foreign administrators rule to benefit their homeland
- ◆ Colonialism is related to but distinct from imperialism
- ◆ Colonisers exploit human and economic resources heavily
- ◆ It creates political and legal domination over societies
- ◆ Colonialism establishes economic and political dependence
- ◆ Exploitation defines relationships between colonies and imperial powers
- ◆ Racial and cultural inequality is a key feature

## Objective Questions

1. Which empire captured Ceuta in 1415, marking the beginning of modern colonialism?
2. Who was the Spanish explorer who arrived in the Bahamas in 1492?
3. Which revolution marked the first major independence movement in the Americas in 1776?
4. Which African country was colonised by Belgium and suffered extreme exploitation?
5. What is the term for the 19th-century European division and conquest of Africa?
6. Which ideology justifies colonial expansion for economic and military advantage?

7. Which country was NOT colonised by European powers in Africa?
8. What was the primary crop cultivated in plantation colonies like Virginia?
9. Which British document supported Jewish settlement in Palestine in 1917?
10. What term describes indirect colonial control through economic dependence?

## Answers

1. Portugal
2. Christopher Columbus
3. American Revolution
4. Congo
5. Scramble for Africa
6. Imperialism
7. Ethiopia
8. Tobacco
9. Balfour Declaration
10. Neocolonialism

## Assignments

1. Discuss the major impacts of colonialism on colonised societies.
2. Examine the factors that led to the rise of colonialism.
3. Provide a critical analysis of the Age of Discovery and its role in colonial expansion.
4. Explain the different types of colonialism with relevant examples.

5. Analyse the historical trajectory of colonialism from its emergence to decline.

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# Latin American Revolution

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ analyse the Latin American Revolution and its significance
- ◆ trace the causes that led to the revolution
- ◆ examine the roles of Simón Bolívar, José de San Martín, and Francisco de Miranda
- ◆ evaluate the outcomes and consequences of the revolution

### Prerequisites

The term 'Latin America' primarily refers to the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries of the New World. Before the arrival of Europeans in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, the region was home to numerous indigenous civilisations, most notably the Olmec, Maya, Muisca, and Inca in South America.

Following European colonisation, the region came under the control of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns, which imposed Roman Catholicism and their respective languages. Both colonial powers also brought African slaves to their territories, particularly in regions where indigenous populations were either absent or unsuitable for forced labour.

By the early 19th century, nearly all of Spanish America had attained independence through armed struggle, with the exceptions of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Meanwhile, Brazil, which had become a monarchy, separate from Portugal, transitioned into a republic in the late 19th century. However, political independence from European monarchies did not immediately result in the abolition of black slavery in the newly sovereign nations.

The post-independence period in Spanish America was marked by political and economic instability. Great Britain and the United States exerted considerable influence in the region, leading to a form of neo-colonialism. While these nations maintained their political sovereignty, foreign powers exercised significant control over their economic affairs.

## Keywords

Creoles, Independence, Napoleon, Bolívar, San Martín, Monroe Doctrine, Haitian Revolution

## Discussion

### 4.2.1 The fall of Spain's Global Empire

By 1808, Spain's vast empire in the New World stretched from parts of what is now the western United States all the way down to Tierra del Fuego in South America. It covered territories from the Caribbean to the Pacific. But by 1825, almost all of it was gone, with only a few islands in the Caribbean remaining under Spanish rule. How did such a powerful empire unravel so quickly? The answer lies in a mix of economic frustrations, social divisions, and global events that pushed Latin America towards revolution.

**Resentment Among the Creoles :** The Spanish colonies had a wealthy and influential class of Creoles- people of European descent born in the Americas. Despite their deep roots in the colonies, they were excluded from key government positions, which were mostly given to newly arrived Spanish officials. This lack of representation bred frustration among Creoles, who felt sidelined in their own homeland.

**Strict Trade Rules and Economic Hardship :** Spain controlled colonial

economies tightly, allowing its colonies to trade only with the mother country - and at prices that favoured Spanish merchants. Many colonists, particularly those producing goods like coffee, cacao, and minerals, found ways to sell their products illegally to British and American traders, who offered better deals. By the time Spain loosened these trade restrictions in the late 18th century, many in the colonies had already lost faith in Spanish economic policies.

**The Influence of other Revolutions:** The American Revolution (1765–1783) inspired Latin American leaders, showing that European rule could be overthrown and replaced with a more just system. However, the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804), in which enslaved people successfully rose against French colonial rule, caused fear among the colonial elite. They worried that if Spanish control weakened, enslaved and Indigenous communities might follow Haiti's example and revolt.

**A Weakened Spain :** Spain itself was struggling. After the death of King Charles III in 1788, his son, Charles IV, proved to be a weak and indecisive ruler. His government became increasingly dysfunctional, and

Spain's involvement in European wars drained its resources. The country's naval defeat at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 further weakened its ability to govern its colonies, leaving them feeling more neglected than ever.

**A New Sense of Identity:** By the late 18th century, many Latin Americans no longer saw themselves as Spaniards. They had their own culture, traditions, and way of life. The Prussian scientist Alexander von Humboldt, who travelled through Latin America at the time, noted that many locals proudly called themselves "Americans" rather than "Spaniards." Meanwhile, Spanish officials continued to treat Creoles as second-class citizens, further widening the divide.

**Racial Inequality and Social Tensions:** Colonial society was built on rigid racial hierarchies, with European-born Spaniards at the top and Indigenous, African, and mixed-race populations facing discrimination. Even within the privileged Creole class, racial purity was a major concern - status often depended on how much Spanish ancestry one could prove. The system was so rigid that wealthy mixed-race individuals could sometimes "buy" their whiteness to move up the social ladder. This deeply racist structure fuelled tensions and resentment, even among those who benefited from it.

**Napoleon's Invasion: The Final Straw:** In 1808, Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Spain and placed his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, on the Spanish throne. Even many loyal Spanish Americans were outraged - how could they be expected to obey a Spanish king who was really a French puppet? As Spain fought back against Napoleon, many in Latin America saw an opportunity to break free from Spanish rule altogether.

With a weak Spanish government, frustrated Creoles, economic hardship, and growing nationalist sentiment, the

stage was set for revolution. What followed was a wave of independence movements that swept through Latin America, ending centuries of Spanish colonial rule and reshaping the continent's future.

#### 4.2.2 Rebellion

The chaos in Spain provided a perfect excuse for rebellion without committing treason. Many Creoles claimed to be loyal to Spain, not Napoleon. In places like Argentina, colonies "sort of" declared independence, stating they would only rule themselves until either Charles IV or his son Ferdinand was reinstated on the Spanish throne. This half-measure was much more palatable to those who did not want to outright declare independence. However, in the end, there was no real turning back from such a step. Argentina was the first to formally declare independence on 9 July 1816.

The independence of Latin America from Spain became inevitable once the Creoles began to see themselves as Americans and the Spaniards as something different. By that point, Spain found itself in a difficult position: The Creoles demanded positions of influence in the colonial bureaucracy and free trade. Spain granted neither, which caused great resentment and contributed to the movement towards independence. Even if Spain had agreed to these changes, they would have empowered a more powerful, wealthier colonial elite with experience in administering their home regions - a path that would have inevitably led to independence. Some Spanish officials must have realised this, and so the decision was made to squeeze as much as possible out of the colonial system before it collapsed.

Of all the factors mentioned, the most important was probably Napoleon's invasion of Spain. Not only did it create a massive distraction and tie up Spanish troops and

ships, but it also pushed many undecided Creoles firmly in favour of independence. By the time Spain began to stabilise - when Ferdinand reclaimed the throne in 1813 - colonies in Mexico, Argentina, and northern South America were already in revolt.

### 4.2.3 Figures in Latin American Independence

During the early decades of the nineteenth century, the Spanish Empire faced crises both within its European heartland and across its vast colonies in the Americas. Spain was plunged into turmoil following the Napoleonic invasion during the Peninsular War, which led to the abdication of King Charles IV and King Ferdinand VII in 1808. Napoleon appointed his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, as the Spanish monarch. However, many Spaniards, both in Spain and in Spanish America, refused to acknowledge his legitimacy. This rejection created a power vacuum, which was filled by the establishment of provincial juntas that advocated for self-governance in the absence of a ruling monarch.

In 1810, the regional juntas in Spain united to form the Supreme Central Junta, but many colonial juntas resisted joining, fearing a lack of equal representation and rights. This period also saw rising tensions between the Creoles (Spaniards born in the colonies) and the Peninsulars (Spaniards born in Spain), tensions that intensified during the French occupation. Following the restoration of King Ferdinand VII in 1814, many colonial juntas sought to retain their self-governance and ultimately fought for independence.

By 1825, most Spanish American colonies had gained independence, with Cuba and Puerto Rico being the only exceptions. Among the key figures in these revolutionary movements were Simón Bolívar and José de

San Martín, two iconic leaders whose actions played a pivotal role in the Spanish American Wars of Independence. Bolívar, hailed as a hero and liberator across Latin America, helped lead the independence movements of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia. San Martín, a national hero of Argentina, was equally influential, particularly in the southern regions of the conflict. Together, they were among the foremost figures in the struggle for Latin American freedom.

#### 4.2.3.1 Simón Bolívar: The Liberator of South America

Simón Bolívar (1783–1830) was born into an affluent Venezuelan family with deep roots dating back to the sixteenth century. His family was granted extensive estates and encomiendas (land grants that included the labour of indigenous peoples), and they amassed great wealth, particularly from sugar plantations and mining operations in the Caracas region. Bolívar used much of his family's wealth to support the independence movements in South America.

When the Venezuelan independence movement erupted in 1810, Bolívar, then a young officer, became involved in the struggle. Following the successful rebellion in Venezuela, Bolívar played a central role in the creation of the First Republic of Venezuela, which, however, fell to Spanish royalist forces in 1812. Bolívar escaped to Cartagena in Colombia, where he wrote the *Manifesto de Cartagena*, urging New Granada (modern-day Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela) to unite against the Spanish.

In 1813, Bolívar led a successful military campaign, reclaiming Venezuela and establishing the Second Republic. However, it too was short-lived, falling to royalist forces in 1814. Bolívar returned to exile in Jamaica and Haiti, before returning to Venezuela in 1817

to rebuild his army. Over the next few years, Bolívar's forces fought numerous battles, eventually leading to the independence of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia, with Bolívar laying the groundwork for the establishment of democratic republics.

#### **4.2.3.2 José de San Martín: The Hero of the Southern Struggle**

José de San Martín (1778–1850) was born in Argentina but spent much of his youth in Spain. He participated in the Peninsular War against the French occupation of Spain in 1808 and, after forging contacts with Spanish American independence supporters, returned to South America in 1812 to fight for the United Provinces of South America. San Martín's leadership was crucial in Argentina's successful independence in 1816, but his ambitions extended beyond his home country. He believed that the independence of Peru was essential for the liberation of all of Spanish America.

In 1817, San Martín led an army of 5,000 men across the Andes Mountains into Chile, where they defeated the Spanish and liberated the country. Following Chile's independence, San Martín helped establish a Chilean navy that facilitated the invasion of Peru. In July 1821, San Martín's forces seized partial control of Lima, Peru, and he was appointed the Protector of Peru.

#### **4.2.3.3 Sebastián Francisco de Miranda: The Precursor of Liberation**

Sebastián Francisco de Miranda (1750–1816) is often regarded as the precursor to Bolívar's role as the "Liberator" of Latin America. Born in Caracas, Venezuela, Miranda came from a wealthy Creole family. His early education was at the Royal and Pontifical University of Caracas, and he

soon joined the Spanish military. Miranda distinguished himself in the Moroccan and Florida campaigns and later gained recognition in Europe and the United States.

Miranda's experiences led him to a deep conviction in the cause of South American independence. He spent several years travelling across Europe, seeking support for Latin American freedom, and was in contact with revolutionary figures like Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and the leaders of the French Revolution.

In 1806, Miranda launched an invasion of Venezuela with the support of American financiers. The expedition ultimately failed, but the seeds of revolution had been sown. Miranda's advocacy for independence inspired leaders like Bolívar and others to continue the struggle. In 1811, Miranda returned to Venezuela, and together with Bolívar, they helped establish the First Venezuelan Republic.

However, Miranda's tenure as a leader was short-lived. Amidst a growing royalist resistance and an earthquake that devastated the republic, Miranda agreed to an armistice with the Spanish forces, leading to his arrest by Bolívar and his subsequent imprisonment in Spain. Miranda died in prison in 1816, never living to see the success of the independence movements he had helped inspire.

Today, Bolívar is revered across Latin America, with many countries adopting his ideals of liberty and democracy. San Martín is a national hero in Argentina and Chile, and Miranda's contributions are honoured in Venezuela, where he is remembered as a visionary who laid the groundwork for the eventual success of the independence struggle. Though their roles differed, the combined efforts of these three leaders were instrumental in shaping the future of Latin America and securing its independence from Spanish rule.

#### 4.2.4 The Monroe Doctrine and Aftermath

The Monroe Doctrine, issued by President James Monroe in 1823, was a pivotal moment in American foreign policy. It stated that the United States would regard any attempt by European powers to interfere in the Western Hemisphere as a threat to its peace and security. This doctrine, while primarily directed at European imperial ambitions, also made it clear that the United States would not meddle in European affairs. Interestingly, the Monroe Doctrine was supported by the British government, which, despite its own colonial interests, recognised the potential for conflict if European powers reasserted control over former Spanish colonies in the Americas. It further asserted the independence of Latin American nations, acknowledging their right to self-rule and offering them protection from European intervention.

The rise of independence movements in Latin America during the late 18th and early 19th centuries was deeply influenced by revolutionary ideas from Europe and North America. The American Revolution (1776) and the French Revolution (1789) served as powerful inspirations for many in Latin America. In particular, Francisco de Miranda of Venezuela, who had fought in the American Revolutionary War, was one of the early proponents of independence in Latin America. However, it was the success of the French Revolution that ignited the first major uprisings in the region, starting with Haiti in 1791.

The Haitian Revolution was a groundbreaking event in the history of colonial uprisings. Saint-Domingue (modern-day Haiti), a French colony, had a large enslaved population. Inspired by the principles of the French Revolution, slaves rose up in revolt, initially seeking freedom from bondage. Within weeks, much of the colony had fallen

into the hands of the slaves. The revolution evolved from a fight for liberty into a war for full independence. In 1793, France abolished slavery in its colonies, and by 1804, after a long and bloody struggle, Haiti declared itself an independent nation. The Haitian Revolution remains significant not only as the first successful slave revolt in history but also as a symbol of the fight against colonialism and oppression.

Mexico's War of Independence was a complex combination of armed resistance and political negotiation. The movement began in 1810 when Miguel Hidalgo Costilla, a Catholic priest, issued a call to arms against Spanish rule. Hidalgo's forces were initially successful but lacked organisation, leading to their eventual defeat. Hidalgo was captured and executed, but the cause was continued by José María Morelos, another key figure in the struggle. Mexico's independence came not through outright military victory but through a series of political agreements. The "Army of the Three Guarantees," which united various factions, secured the final victory over the Spanish in 1821.

Venezuela's struggle for independence began as early as 1806 when Francisco de Miranda, a former soldier in the American Revolution, tried and failed to liberate his homeland. It wasn't until 1813, when Simón Bolívar took command of the Venezuelan forces, that the fight gained serious momentum. Bolívar, often called the "Liberator," brought together diverse forces, including Haitian volunteers and Irish mercenaries, to lead the Venezuelan army to victory. Bolívar's leadership extended beyond Venezuela; his campaigns also contributed to the independence of Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia. By 1823, Venezuela had won its freedom.

Across the continent, other nations followed suit. Paraguay declared independence in 1811, while Argentina did so in 1816,

followed by Chile in 1818. Guatemala gained independence in 1821, while Brazil, the only major Latin American country to achieve independence peacefully, did so in 1822. Peru finally gained its independence in 1824, while Bolivia came into being as a republic in the same year. Uruguay followed suit in 1828, completing the wave of revolutions that swept Latin America from 1791 to 1830.

The timeline of Latin American independence movements is marked by several key events and figures. The Haitian Revolution in 1791 set the stage for further uprisings. In Mexico, Hidalgo's 1810 rebellion sparked the larger movement, which ultimately resulted in its independence in 1821. Bolívar's campaigns, which spanned from 1811 to 1824,

were central to the independence of much of northern South America. Meanwhile, José de San Martín, a key figure in the southern part of the continent, played a crucial role in Argentina, Chile, and Peru's liberation.

The Latin American revolutions were diverse in their causes and outcomes. While some countries, like Brazil, achieved independence relatively peacefully, others, like Venezuela and Mexico, were engulfed in prolonged wars. Despite these differences, the common thread was the desire for freedom from colonial rule, inspired by the success of the American and French Revolutions. By 1830, most of Latin America had won its independence from Spain, marking the end of centuries of colonial domination.

## Recap

- ◆ Francisco de Miranda initiated Latin American independence efforts
- ◆ Creole elites sought independence from Spanish colonial rule
- ◆ American and French revolutions inspired Latin American ideologies
- ◆ Indigenous people played vital roles in independence struggles
- ◆ Miranda's 1806 expedition to Venezuela failed, but inspired others
- ◆ Simón Bolívar continued Miranda's mission, leading Venezuelan independence
- ◆ Bolívar's leadership unified South American forces against Spanish rule
- ◆ Bolívar's vision of Gran Colombia aimed for South American unity
- ◆ José de San Martín led revolutions in Argentina, Chile, Peru
- ◆ San Martín's crossing of the Andes was a key military triumph
- ◆ Bolívar and San Martín cooperated, but differed in governance views
- ◆ Bolívar's victories culminated in independence
- ◆ The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 opposed European intervention in America

- ◆ The Monroe Doctrine supported Latin American independence movements
- ◆ Both Bolívar and Monroe sought to protect Western Hemisphere autonomy
- ◆ Latin American revolutions shifted the power dynamics in the Americas

## Objective Questions

1. Who led the independence movement in Venezuela?
2. Which revolution inspired many Latin American leaders?
3. Which country was the first to declare independence in Latin America in 1816?
4. What document did President James Monroe issue in 1823?
5. Which country did José de San Martín liberate by crossing the Andes?
6. Which colony became the first to gain independence after a successful slave revolt?
7. In which year did the Battle of Trafalgar take place?
8. Who was the Catholic priest that initiated Mexico's independence movement?
9. Which island remained under Spanish rule after 1825?

## Answers

1. Simon Bolívar
2. American Revolution
3. Argentina
4. Monroe Doctrine
5. Chile



6. Haiti
7. 1805
8. Miguel Hidalgo Castillo
9. Cuba

## Assignments

1. Discuss the impact of the Latin American Revolution on the region and the world.
2. Identify and explain the main causes of the Latin American Revolution.
3. Analyse the roles of Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín in the Latin American Revolution.

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# UNIT

## Industrial Revolution

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the key aspects of the Industrial Revolution
- ◆ examine the socio-economic and political impacts of the Industrial Revolution
- ◆ study the consequences of industrialisation on society, economy, and the environment

### Prerequisites

Before the Industrial Revolution, Britain was vastly different. Communication was slow, with news spreading by travellers or messengers, and goods were distributed mainly within local areas. Travel was difficult, as there were no mechanised forms of transport - no cars, planes, or paved roads. People relied on themselves and their communities for most of their needs. Food was produced locally, and clothing was made from animal hides or furs, as mass production and cotton imports were not yet commonplace.

For the majority, life was agricultural. Though the feudal system had ended, people remained dependent on each other and their masters. Some fortunate individuals benefited from imported goods through ports like London and Bristol. Manufacturing largely relied on natural resources, with windmills, for example, easing the miller's work.

Education was poor; the wealthy were tutored privately, while most ordinary people, particularly girls after the age of seven, received little formal education. Politics centred on land ownership and military achievements, with women and commoners having few rights. Life was a constant battle against famine, harsh landlords, overwork, and misfortune.

Poverty was widespread, as many agricultural jobs were seasonal, and merchants faced fluctuating workloads. The Elizabethan Poor Law, introduced during Elizabeth I's reign and later amended, provided some assistance. However, the poor were often dependent on individual parishes, with many ending up in workhouses.

## Keywords

Industrial Revolution, Capitalism, Imperialism, Steam Power, Agricultural Revolution, Technological Advancements

## Discussion

### 4.3.1 Causes for the Emergence of Industrialism

The Industrial Revolution, which began in the late 18th century, marked a transformative period in history. The changes that took place during this era reshaped societies across the globe, particularly in Britain, where it all began. It was a time of monumental progress that fundamentally altered the structure of economies, societies, and even politics. Before the revolution, the majority of people were involved in agriculture and rural life. The onset of industrialisation brought about economic advancements, technological innovations, and urbanisation that changed the world forever. Below, we explore the causes of the Industrial Revolution, delving into how they collectively contributed to the rise of modern industrial society.

#### 4.3.1.1 Capitalism

One of the fundamental drivers of the Industrial Revolution was the emergence of capitalism. This economic system, particularly in its laissez-faire form, advocated for minimal government interference in business and economic activities. The idea was that individual entrepreneurs, rather than the state,

should take charge of economic decisions. In Britain, wealthy entrepreneurs were eager to invest in factories and mines, motivated by the promise of profits. This shift from mercantilism, which was characterised by state control over the economy, to capitalism allowed for a free and more competitive market, fostering an environment ripe for industrial growth. As these entrepreneurs built factories and invested in production, the economy began to expand rapidly, laying the foundation for industrialisation.

#### 4.3.1.2 European Imperialism and Colonialism

By the mid-18th century, European nations, particularly Britain, had established vast empires across the world. European imperialism played a significant role in the Industrial Revolution, as it provided access to vast quantities of raw materials from colonies around the globe. These raw materials, including cotton, iron, and coal, were essential for the growth of industries in Europe. Furthermore, the empire created an extensive market for manufactured goods. As Britain expanded its colonial reach, the trade routes it established allowed goods to be exported to far-flung corners of the world.

Thus, imperialism contributed not only by supplying the raw materials necessary for production but also by creating a vast global market for industrial goods.

#### **4.3.1.3 Mining of Resources**

The availability of raw materials, especially coal and iron, was crucial to the success of the Industrial Revolution. Britain was rich in these resources, which were fundamental to powering the steam engines that drove industrial machinery and railways. Coal was also essential for smelting iron, another key material used in industrial production. The development of more efficient mining techniques allowed for the extraction of these resources on an unprecedented scale. As industries grew, so too did the demand for coal, prompting innovations in mining technology that made it easier to access these valuable resources. As a result, Britain became the world leader in iron production, using its own resources to fuel the rise of industries such as railways, shipbuilding, and textiles.

#### **4.3.1.4 Steam Power and Technological Advancements**

One of the most significant technological innovations of the Industrial Revolution was the steam engine, which revolutionised both industry and transportation. The steam engine, developed by figures such as James Watt, provided a new, more reliable power source than the water mills previously used in factories. This allowed factories to be located anywhere, not just near rivers. The steam engine also powered trains and ships, facilitating the movement of goods and people across greater distances at faster speeds. The widespread adoption of steam power boosted industrial production and efficiency, transforming industries such as textiles, mining, and ironworks.

#### **4.3.1.5 The Agricultural Revolution**

The Agricultural Revolution, which preceded the Industrial Revolution, played a pivotal role in providing the necessary conditions for industrialisation. Agricultural innovations such as crop rotation, selective breeding, and the use of new machinery led to an increase in food production. As a result, Britain's population grew, and fewer workers were needed on the land. The surplus agricultural workers, freed from the need to tend to farms, migrated to cities in search of employment in the newly emerging factories. This shift in the labour force was crucial in providing the manpower needed for industrial growth. Furthermore, as farming became more efficient, it allowed for greater food surpluses, supporting the growing urban populations that were flocking to cities.

#### **4.3.1.6 Scientific Revolution and Innovation**

The period known as the Scientific Revolution, which spanned the 16th and 17th centuries, laid the intellectual foundations for the technological advances that would define the Industrial Revolution. The discoveries of scientists like Isaac Newton and Robert Boyle contributed to a new understanding of nature and the physical world. As scientific ideas gained acceptance, they spurred technological innovations that facilitated industrial growth. New methods of manufacturing, the development of machinery, and improvements in materials were all informed by scientific principles. This spirit of inquiry and invention was crucial for driving the innovations that powered the Industrial Revolution.

#### **4.3.1.7 Governmental Policies and Support**

Government policies played an important

role in fostering industrialisation in Britain. The country had a relatively stable political system, which provided a favourable environment for economic growth. The British government adopted policies that encouraged innovation, including the granting of patents to inventors, which protected their inventions and encouraged further investment in new technologies. Moreover, the government's support for the enclosure movement, which consolidated small farms into larger estates, also facilitated the rise of industrialisation by creating a surplus of labour. The establishment of financial institutions, such as the Bank of England, provided the necessary capital for entrepreneurs to invest in industry. These governmental policies helped create a business-friendly environment that was crucial for the success of the Industrial Revolution.

### 4.3.1.8 Political Influence and Global Reach

Britain's political influence during the 18th century extended beyond its shores, particularly to its colonies. The victories in battles such as those at Plassey and Buxar gave Britain control over vast parts of India, which was a major producer of cotton. This control over India's cotton industry ensured a steady supply of raw materials for British textile mills. Additionally, Britain's imperial reach provided access to other essential resources, including minerals and agricultural products, which further fuelled industrial growth. The wealth generated from these colonies gave Britain the financial resources

to invest in the technologies that would shape the Industrial Revolution.

### 4.3.1.9 Population Growth

The rise in population during the 18th century also contributed to the Industrial Revolution. Improved agricultural practices led to an increase in food production, which helped sustain the growing population. A larger population meant more workers for the factories, but it also created a larger domestic market for goods. As the population grew, so did the demand for manufactured goods, providing a further incentive for industrial growth. The increase in population not only provided labour for factories but also created a greater need for transportation and communication, both of which were revolutionised during the period.

### 4.3.1.10 Transportation and Communication Networks

The development of efficient transportation and communication systems was a key factor in the success of the Industrial Revolution. The construction of railways, canals, and improved roads facilitated the movement of goods and raw materials across the country, reducing transport costs and increasing the speed at which products could be delivered. The invention of the telegraph, which revolutionised long-distance communication, further supported industrialisation by enabling businesses to coordinate activities over long distances. These improvements in infrastructure were crucial in ensuring that industries could thrive and expand.

## Recap

- ◆ Capitalism fostered industrial growth and innovation
- ◆ Imperialism provided raw materials and markets
- ◆ Coal and iron were essential resources
- ◆ Steam power revolutionised industry and transport
- ◆ Agricultural Revolution freed workers for factories
- ◆ Scientific Revolution spurred technological advancements
- ◆ Government policies supported industrial growth
- ◆ Political influence expanded Britain's global reach
- ◆ Population growth increased labour and demand
- ◆ Transportation and communication systems improved efficiency

## Objective Questions

1. Which economic system fuelled the Industrial Revolution in Britain?
2. What role did European imperialism play in the Industrial Revolution?
3. Which raw materials were crucial for industrial growth in Britain?
4. Who developed the steam engine that powered the Industrial Revolution?
5. What agricultural innovation freed workers for factory jobs?
6. What scientific principle contributed to the technological advancements of the revolution?
7. How did the British government support industrialisation?
8. Which country's control over cotton contributed to Britain's textile industry?

9. How did population growth impact the Industrial Revolution?
10. Which transportation system paved the way for the success of Industrial Revolution?

## Answers

1. Capitalism
2. Provided raw materials and markets
3. Coal and iron
4. James Watt
5. Agricultural innovations (crop rotation, selective breeding)
6. Newtonian physics and Boyle's laws
7. Patents, enclosure movement, and financial institutions
8. India
9. Increased labour and demand for goods
10. Railways

## Assignments

1. Analyse the causes of the Industrial Revolution.
2. Discuss the role of banking in the Industrial Revolution.
3. Evaluate the social and economic conditions in Europe during the Industrial Revolution.
4. Assess how the Industrial Revolution transformed industries.



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# Impact of Industrial Revolution

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ examine the impacts of the Industrial Revolution
- ♦ analyse different perspectives on the Industrial Revolution
- ♦ evaluate the effects of the Industrial Revolution on the global landscape

### Prerequisites

The Industrial Revolution began in the United Kingdom in the early 18th century. The Act of Union, which unified England and Scotland, ushered in a period of internal peace and an integrated market, eliminating internal trade barriers. Britain also benefited from a rapidly developing banking sector, a clear legal framework for setting up joint-stock companies, and a system to enforce the rule of law. Additionally, the country had an evolving transportation system.

By the late 1700s, the manual-labour-based economy of Great Britain was transitioning into an industrialised one, dominated by the manufacture of machinery. This shift began with the mechanisation of textile production, the advancement of iron-making techniques, and the increased use of refined coal. The expansion of trade was facilitated by the construction of canals, improved road networks, and railways. Steam power, primarily fuelled by coal, and mechanised production - particularly in textile manufacturing - became central to increased production capacity. The development of all-metal machine tools in the early 19th century enabled the production of more machinery for various industries.

This industrial transformation spread across Western Europe and North America throughout the 19th century, eventually reaching most of the world. The societal impacts of these changes were profound.

The First Industrial Revolution evolved into the Second Industrial Revolution around 1850, marked by technological and economic advances such as steam-powered ships, railways, the internal combustion engine, and electric power generation.

## Keywords

Urbanisation, Factory System, Labour Unions, Child Labour, Technological Innovations, Social Reforms

## Discussion

### 4.4.1 Negative Effects of the Industrial Revolution

While the Industrial Revolution brought about significant economic growth and new opportunities, it also resulted in various negative consequences, including environmental degradation and severe hardships for workers. This period of rapid transformation, which began in the late 1700s and extended into the early 1800s, revolutionised Europe and America. The introduction of new technologies, such as mechanised looms, steam-powered locomotives, and advanced iron smelting techniques, significantly altered societies that had once been primarily rural, based on agriculture and handcrafted goods. The shift to urbanisation saw many people move from the countryside to growing industrial cities, where they found employment in factory-based environments.

Though the Industrial Revolution contributed to economic expansion, it also introduced significant challenges, such as pollution, health and safety risks, poor living conditions, and exploitation of workers. Many of these issues persisted and even worsened during the Second Industrial Revolution in the late 19th century. The

following outlines the most significant negative effects of this period.

#### 4.4.1.1 Horrible Living Conditions for Workers

As cities expanded rapidly during the Industrial Revolution, there was a severe shortage of housing. Migrants flocking to urban areas found themselves squeezed into overcrowded, unsanitary tenements. Wealthier citizens fled to the suburbs, leaving the working-class population to live in cramped, dilapidated conditions. In Liverpool, Dr. William Henry Duncan's survey in the 1830s revealed that a third of the city's population resided in cellars with earthen floors and no sanitation or ventilation. Entire families, sometimes as many as sixteen people, shared a single room and one privy. The lack of clean water and overflowing sewage systems made workers and their families susceptible to deadly diseases like cholera.

#### 4.4.1.2 Poor Nutrition

The poor diet of industrial workers was another alarming issue. In his 1832 study on the living conditions of workers in Manchester, physician James Phillips

Kay described their meagre meals. Workers typically started their day with tea or coffee and a slice of bread, followed by a midday meal of boiled potatoes, lard, and occasionally fried bacon. After work, they might have more tea with bread or oatmeal and potatoes. The monotonous diet led to widespread malnutrition, causing a range of health issues, including stomach problems, weight loss, and a sallow complexion.

#### **4.4.1.3 A Stressful, Unsatisfying Lifestyle**

Workers who migrated from rural areas to cities found themselves trapped in a highly regimented and monotonous way of life. Factory schedules were strict, with little room for flexibility. Employees had to be punctual or risk losing their wages or even facing fines. Once at work, they were expected to perform repetitive tasks for long hours with little to no breaks, which left little time for leisure or recreation. City authorities often banned public festivals that workers had previously enjoyed in their rural communities. Consequently, many workers turned to taverns to escape the grind of their daily existence.

#### **4.4.1.4 Dangerous Workplaces**

The lack of safety regulations in factories made working conditions extremely hazardous. Industrial machines were often poorly maintained, and workers were at constant risk of injury. One notable case, described in a contemporary newspaper, involved millworker Daniel Buckley, who had his hand caught and crushed in machinery in 1830. The injuries led to his eventual death. Similarly, coal mines, which were essential for powering steam engines, were fraught with danger. A gas explosion at a mine severely injured a worker named James Jackson, who required opium to cope with the excruciating pain. Despite his severe

injuries, Jackson was deemed fit to return to work after a few weeks.

#### **4.4.1.5 Child Labour**

The demand for cheap labour in factories and mills during the Industrial Revolution led to the widespread use of child workers. Children, particularly orphans, were often taken from poorhouses and housed in mill dormitories while working long hours in dangerous conditions. In some cases, children suffered severe injuries, such as the case of Mary Richards, a 10-year-old girl whose apron became caught in a textile mill machine, causing her to be violently thrown to the floor. Child labour, according to historian Beverly Lemire, became one of the most tragic outcomes of industrialisation, serving as a catalyst for increased production at the cost of human dignity.

#### **4.4.1.6 Discrimination Against Women**

The Industrial Revolution entrenched patterns of gender inequality that persisted well into the 20th century. Factory owners often paid women significantly less than men for the same work, based on the outdated assumption that women did not need to earn a living wage. Instead, they were seen as working for “pin money”- funds that were merely supplementary to their husbands’ income. The introduction of office work in the late 19th century, driven by the advent of the typewriter, shifted many men out of clerical roles and replaced them with women, who were paid less and often pigeonholed into this category of “women’s work.” This perpetuated gender-based discrimination in the workforce for decades.

#### **4.4.1.7 Environmental Harm**

The burning of coal during the Industrial Revolution caused widespread environmental damage, particularly in industrial cities.

The pollution in cities such as London and Manchester reached alarming levels, with air filled with harmful particulate matter from coal-burning factories. Hugh Miller, a writer of the time, described the dismal atmosphere in Manchester, noting the “innumerable chimneys” that emitted thick smoke, obscuring the skyline. As pollution worsened, it contributed to a surge in respiratory illnesses and higher mortality rates in industrial areas. Furthermore, the extensive use of fossil fuels during this period is believed to have played a role in the onset of climate change as early as the 1830s, as indicated by a 2016 study in *Nature*.

While the Industrial Revolution had many positive outcomes, including economic growth and the creation of a burgeoning middle class, it also created significant social and environmental problems. Over time, however, reforms were introduced to improve working conditions, and labour unions gained the right to negotiate for better wages and working hours. These changes led to some improvements in the lives of the working class. Despite the hardships, the era of industrialisation also brought about increased job opportunities and the expansion of personal freedoms, including access to leisure activities, travel, and education, which helped shape the modern world.

#### **4.4.2 Positive Impacts of the Industrial Revolution**

The Industrial Revolution, which began in Britain in the late 18th century, is widely considered one of the most transformative events in human history. While it is often remembered for its many negative consequences, such as poor working conditions and child labour, it also brought about a host of positive changes that continue to shape our modern world. From advancements in technology to improved living standards, the Industrial Revolution

played a crucial role in shaping contemporary society.

##### **4.4.2.1 Improved Quality of Life**

The Industrial Revolution played a pivotal role in improving the quality of life for people, both in the immediate aftermath and in the long term. Prior to this period, goods were produced on a small scale, often within households or small workshops, through a system known as the ‘cottage industry’. This method of production was slow, inefficient, and struggled to meet the growing demand caused by the increasing population. As a result, entrepreneurs sought ways to increase efficiency, ultimately leading to the creation of the factory system.

The factory system enabled the mass production of goods, making products more accessible and affordable for the wider population. Goods such as textiles, tools, and household items, once considered luxuries, became more widely available, contributing to an improved standard of living for many. Over time, this mass production system laid the foundation for a consumer-driven society, where individuals could enjoy greater access to a variety of products, from everyday necessities to new innovations in technology.

##### **4.4.2.2 Technological Innovations**

One of the most significant contributions of the Industrial Revolution was the wave of technological innovations that emerged during this period. These innovations not only revolutionised industry but also laid the groundwork for further advancements that continue to shape our world today.

Key inventions such as the spinning jenny, the power loom, the water frame,

and the steam engine transformed production methods, increasing output and reducing reliance on manual labour. These inventions made industries more efficient, leading to the mass production of goods, which in turn allowed for new products and services to emerge. The steam engine, for example, was critical in powering machinery, trains, and ships, facilitating transportation and trade on an unprecedented scale. The ability to produce goods faster and more efficiently was instrumental in shaping the modern economy, providing people with more job opportunities and greater access to products.

#### **4.4.2.3 Economic Growth and Wealth Creation**

The Industrial Revolution led to significant economic growth, particularly in industrialised nations like Britain. The establishment of factories and mines created a multitude of job opportunities for the working class, despite the often difficult working conditions. These jobs, though low-paid and sometimes dangerous, offered workers a steady income that allowed them to meet the basic necessities of life.

For the business owners and factory managers, the revolution presented opportunities for immense wealth. Industrialisation led to increased production, which, when coupled with global trade networks, resulted in significant profits. The wealth generated by industries contributed to the expansion of urban centres and the creation of a new, wealthy industrial class, often referred to as the bourgeoisie. This shift in wealth and power from the traditional aristocracy to the industrial elite marked a major social and economic transformation.

#### **4.4.2.4 Social Reforms and Movements**

While the Industrial Revolution introduced many challenges, it also set in motion a

series of social reforms and movements that sought to address the negative aspects of industrialisation. As a result, many societal improvements emerged in response to the difficulties faced by workers, particularly in terms of child labour, poor working conditions, and inadequate living standards.

Labour movements and trade unions became powerful forces, advocating for better wages, improved working hours, and safer working conditions. The rise of socialist movements also led to calls for greater equality and workers' rights, influencing policies that would eventually lead to significant reforms in the workplace. The Factory Acts, for example, were introduced to regulate working hours and improve conditions for children and women in factories, marking a step forward in workers' rights.

At the same time, the Industrial Revolution gave rise to feminist movements, which campaigned for gender equality and better treatment of women in the workplace. Women's rights to vote, work, and access education began to gain recognition, laying the groundwork for the social changes that would follow in the 20th century.

#### **4.4.2.5 Urbanisation and Improved Infrastructure**

The rapid industrialisation of the 19th century led to the growth of cities and the development of urban infrastructure. While urbanisation brought its own set of challenges, such as overcrowding and sanitation issues, it also led to the creation of new transportation systems, public services, and amenities that improved the lives of city dwellers.

The construction of railways, for instance, revolutionised travel, making it easier for people to commute to work and visit family members in distant towns. This increased mobility also facilitated the movement of

goods, which contributed to the expansion of trade. Public health initiatives, such as the establishment of sewage systems and clean water supplies, helped to combat the spread of diseases, improving public health over time.

#### 4.4.2.6 Expansion of Education and Knowledge

The Industrial Revolution also contributed to the expansion of education, particularly in industrialised nations. The increased demand for skilled workers in factories, as well as the growth of the middle class, led to the establishment of more schools and educational opportunities. Access to education improved, particularly for children, as the importance of literacy and numeracy became more widely recognised in the industrial economy.

The spread of knowledge during this time was also facilitated by the mass production of books, newspapers, and pamphlets, which made information more accessible to a broader audience. This democratisation of knowledge helped to empower individuals and promote literacy, which was critical for

the development of a more informed and engaged public.

#### 4.4.2.7 Long-Term Societal Change

While the immediate effects of the Industrial Revolution were often challenging, they set the stage for long-term societal change. The growth of industry, coupled with the social movements it sparked, reshaped the way people lived and worked. Over time, the rise of the middle class, the expansion of labour rights, and the improvement of working conditions led to the creation of a more equitable society.

In addition, the technological advancements of the Industrial Revolution laid the foundation for the modern world. The continued innovation that began during this period has led to the development of new industries, from electronics to healthcare, that have transformed every aspect of life. The legacy of the Industrial Revolution, though complex, is one of progress and change that continues to shape the world we live in today.

## Recap

- ◆ Overcrowded, unsanitary housing worsened worker conditions
- ◆ Poor diet caused malnutrition and illness
- ◆ Factory work was monotonous and strict
- ◆ Dangerous machines led to severe injuries
- ◆ Child labour exploited young industrial workers
- ◆ Women faced wage discrimination and inequality
- ◆ Coal burning worsened pollution and diseases

- ◆ Mass production improved goods' accessibility
- ◆ Industrialisation drove urbanisation and infrastructure
- ◆ Education expanded to meet workforce needs

## Objective Questions

1. What was a major cause of poor living conditions during the Industrial Revolution?
2. Which disease spread due to unsanitary urban environments?
3. Name one common food item in workers' diets.
4. What was the primary fuel source during industrialisation?
5. Which invention revolutionised textile manufacturing?
6. What role did trade unions play in industrial reforms?
7. Which transportation system facilitated trade and movement?

## Answers

1. Overcrowded urban housing
2. Cholera
3. Bread and tea
4. Coal
5. Spinning Jenny
6. Advocated workers' rights
7. Railways

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# UNIT

## Rise of Socialism

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ analyse the impacts of the Industrial Revolution
- ◆ examine the emergence of socialism
- ◆ explore the nature of socialism
- ◆ assess perspectives on socialism in the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution

### Prerequisites

As a political ideology, socialism largely emerged in response to the economic and social consequences of the Industrial Revolution. A vast body of literature attests to the profound impact industrialisation had on daily life, particularly for the working classes. The reformist trend in British politics during the 1830s helped bring some of these harsh realities to public attention. For instance, the parliamentary investigation of 1832 into conditions in textile factories - later known as the Sadler Committee's Report - exposed the appalling toll on human life resulting from unregulated industrial expansion. Even allowing for possible embellishments or exaggerations, these accounts vividly illustrated a society in which the most callous inhumanity was accepted as part of the natural order, and, crucially, was not initially regarded as a matter of public concern.

In addition to the horrors inflicted by an unregulated factory system, workers also faced significant disruptions brought about by the advent of mechanisation. The introduction of new technologies frequently led to the displacement of labourers. Equally significant were the alienating effects of rapid technological advancements and the consequent restructuring of the workplace, notably through the factory system.



To some observers, however, these evils of industrialisation were not inevitable. This belief was particularly evident among the Utopian Socialists, who emerged in England and on the Continent during this period.

## Keywords

Industrialisation, Capitalism, Socialism, Proletariat, Utopian Socialists, Class Struggle, Trade Unions

## Discussion

### 4.5.1 Socialism: A Response to Industrialisation

The industrialisation of Europe was not merely an economic phenomenon; it was a transformation that reshaped society in profound ways. The introduction of mechanised production led to the displacement of traditional manual labour, causing widespread unemployment among artisans and craftsmen. The rapid expansion of factories created new forms of work that were often monotonous, exploitative, and alienating. In contrast to the skilled labour that defined earlier economic structures, industrial workers found themselves performing repetitive tasks under harsh conditions, with little autonomy or job security.

Many intellectuals and social reformers of the time began to question whether industrial progress truly benefited all sections of society. The economic gains brought by industrialisation were largely concentrated in the hands of factory owners and financiers, while the working class endured long hours, low wages, and hazardous working environments. This growing inequality sparked concerns about the moral and ethical implications of unchecked capitalism, leading to the emergence of socialist thought as a

response.

The roots of socialism can be traced back to early visions of cooperative societies, where production and wealth distribution were structured around communal well-being rather than individual profit. The Utopian Socialists, such as Charles Fourier, Henri de Saint-Simon, and Robert Owen, were among the first to propose alternative models of economic and social organisation. Their ideas laid the groundwork for later socialist movements, which sought to challenge the injustices of industrial capitalism and advocate for a more equitable society.

#### 4.5.1.1 The Core Principles of Socialism

Socialism arose in direct opposition to laissez-faire capitalism, a system championed by Adam Smith, which emphasised free markets, private ownership, and minimal government intervention. Socialists argued that unregulated capitalism led to the concentration of wealth among a small elite, while the majority of workers were left in poverty. Instead, socialism proposed an economic model in which the means of production - factories, land, and industries - were collectively owned and managed for the benefit of society as a whole.

The fundamental principles of socialism include:

- ◆ **Opposition to private capitalism** – Socialists reject the notion that wealth and production should be controlled by a small capitalist class. They argue that economic resources should serve public welfare rather than private profit.
- ◆ **Workers' rights and empowerment** - Socialist thought prioritises the protection of labourers from exploitation, advocating for fair wages, safe working conditions, and job security.
- ◆ **Economic equality** – Socialists seek to reduce vast economic disparities by promoting wealth redistribution through progressive taxation, social welfare programmes, and collective ownership of key industries.

These principles evolved into various strands of socialist ideology, ranging from revolutionary socialism, which called for a complete overthrow of capitalist structures, to democratic socialism, which sought gradual reform through legislative means.

### 4.5.2 The Early Pioneers of Socialism

The rise of socialism coincided with increasing industrialisation and the worsening conditions of the working class. Many early socialists envisioned cooperative communities where workers had greater control over their labour and livelihoods.

#### 4.5.2.1 Important Figures in Early Socialism

- ◆ **Gracchus Babeuf** – A radical thinker during the French Revolution, Babeuf championed

the idea of communal ownership and wealth redistribution. His ideas, though suppressed at the time, foreshadowed later socialist movements.

- ◆ **Henri de Saint-Simon** – A French philosopher who believed that economic planning should be led by industrialists and scientists rather than profit-driven capitalists. He advocated for a society where production served the common good rather than private gain.
- ◆ **Robert Owen** – A British industrialist who implemented socialist principles in practice. At his mills in New Lanark, Scotland, he reduced working hours, improved wages, and provided education for workers' children. His model demonstrated that treating workers humanely could lead to both social and economic success.

These thinkers played a crucial role in shaping early socialist ideology, providing a foundation for later theorists such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

### 4.5.3 Factors Behind the Rise of Socialism

#### 4.5.3.1 A Reaction Against Capitalism

The Industrial Revolution created a stark **class divide** between:

- ◆ **The Bourgeoisie (Capitalists):** Factory owners and business magnates who amassed significant wealth.
- ◆ **The Proletariat (Working Class):** Labourers who toiled in factories under harsh conditions for minimal wages.

As industrial economies expanded, capitalists reaped immense profits, while workers struggled with poor living conditions, inadequate wages, and limited rights. Socialists argued that such inequality was neither natural nor inevitable, but rather a consequence of capitalist exploitation.

### 4.5.3.2 The Growth of Trade Unions

The rise of industrial capitalism also saw the emergence of trade unions, which became a crucial force in advocating for workers' rights. Through collective bargaining, strikes, and protests, trade unions pressured governments to introduce labour laws that protected workers from exploitation.

In Britain, the Factory Acts were introduced in response to public outrage over the treatment of workers, particularly children. These laws regulated working hours, improved workplace safety, and laid the foundation for future labour rights legislation.

### 4.5.3.3 The Chartist Movement

Between 1836 and 1848, British workers mobilised under the Chartist Movement, demanding political representation, universal suffrage, and improved working conditions. Although their demands were initially rejected, the movement paved the way for later democratic and labour rights reforms.

## 4.5.4 The Marxist Perspective on Socialism

One of the most influential socialist thinkers was Karl Marx, who, along with Friedrich Engels, authored *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). Marx offered a comprehensive critique of capitalism and proposed a revolutionary path towards socialism.

### 4.5.4.1 Class Struggle and the Path to Socialism

Marx argued that capitalism was inherently exploitative and unstable, predicting that:

- ◆ Economic inequality would continue to widen.
- ◆ Workers would become aware of their oppression and unite.
- ◆ A proletarian revolution would overthrow the capitalist class.
- ◆ The means of production would be collectively owned by the workers.
- ◆ A socialist system would emerge, ensuring fair wealth distribution.

Marxist socialism inspired major political movements, including the Russian Revolution (1917) and the Chinese Revolution (1949).

### 4.5.4.2 The Evolution of Socialist Thought

While Marxism advocated for revolution, other socialists, such as Eduard Bernstein, argued for gradual reform through democratic institutions. His ideas shaped social democracy, which sought to balance socialist policies with parliamentary democracy, as seen in modern welfare states like Sweden, Norway, and Germany.

## 4.5.5 The Global Impact of Socialism

By the 20th century, socialism had become a global force, shaping economic and political systems worldwide:

- ◆ **The Russian Revolution (1917)**  
– The Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, established the world's first Communist state, based on Marxist principles.

- ◆ **The Chinese Revolution (1949)**
  - Under Mao Zedong, China adopted socialism, restructuring its economy and society.
- ◆ **Western Europe** – Many countries introduced socialist policies, such as universal healthcare (e.g., the NHS in Britain) and state welfare programmes.

Today, socialist principles continue to influence debates on economic justice, workers' rights, and government intervention in the economy. While socialism has evolved in various forms, its core ideals - equality, collective welfare, and opposition to exploitation - remain central to discussions about modern economic and social policies.

## Recap

- ◆ Socialism emerged against industrial capitalism's inequalities
- ◆ Utopian Socialists envisioned cooperative worker societies
- ◆ Socialism opposes private capitalist wealth accumulation
- ◆ Robert Owen implemented socialist ideas practically
- ◆ Karl Marx predicted a proletarian revolution
- ◆ Trade unions fought for labour rights
- ◆ The Chartist Movement sought political reforms
- ◆ Marxism influenced revolutions in Russia and China
- ◆ Social democracy blends socialism with democracy

## Objective Questions

1. Who is considered the father of modern socialism?
2. Who introduced the concept of Utopian Socialism?
3. What book did Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels co-author?
4. Which class did Marx believe would overthrow capitalism?
5. Which British industrialist implemented socialist principles in his mills?

6. Which movement in Britain demanded political reforms from 1836-1848?
7. Which party organised the Russian Revolution of 1917?
8. Who argued for democratic socialism instead of revolution?
9. What industrial law in Britain improved working conditions?
10. Which country introduced nationalised healthcare under socialist policies?

## Answers

1. Karl Marx
2. Henri de Saint-Simon
3. The Communist Manifesto
4. Proletariat
5. Robert Owen
6. Chartist Movement
7. Bolsheviks
8. Eduard Bernstein
9. Factory Acts
10. Britain

## Assignments

1. Analyse how socialism emerged as a response to industrial capitalism.
2. Compare and contrast the ideas of Utopian Socialists and Karl Marx.
3. Discuss the impact of trade unions on labour rights in industrial Europe.

4. Evaluate the influence of socialist policies on modern welfare states.
5. Examine the role of socialism in shaping 20<sup>th</sup> century revolutions.

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# Civil War in USA and Unification Movements in Europe



# UNIT

## The Civil War in the USA

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ analyses the multiple causes and key events of the American Civil War.
- ◆ understand the consequence of the American Civil War
- ◆ understand the background of the American Civil War
- ◆ examine Abraham Lincoln's presidency and his ideas

### Prerequisites

The American Civil War was one of the bloodiest wars in the history of America. It took place from 1861 to 1865. The war broke out between the two sections: the North and the South, and it emerged as a result of the differences between these two sections. While the North was industrial, the South was utterly based on agriculture. The economic differences resulted in two blocks or divisions: South and North. Southerners depended on plantations in addition to slave labour. Unlike the South, the North was wealthy, and they relied on manufactures and did not need slaves. These differences created a problem between the North, and South. Southerners wanted to develop their economy, and to compete with the Northern industrial section. In doing so, they used slaves to labour on their plantations. Slaves became a property in the South; they worked in severe conditions as planters, carpenters, drivers...etc. On the other hand, Northerners were against slavery, and they treated slaves as natural citizens; in addition, they sought to abolish the whole institution of slavery from the southern territories.

# Keywords

Civil War, Slavery, Missouri Compromise, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Bull Run, Emancipation, Proclamation

## Discussion

### 5.1.1 Discussions

American Civil War, also called War Between the States, four-year war (1861–65) between the United States and 11 Southern states that seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. The secession of the Southern states (South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina)

Between 1815 and 1861 the economy of the Northern states was rapidly modernising and diversifying. Although agriculture - mostly smaller farms that relied on free labour - remained the dominant sector in the North, industrialisation had taken root there. As the factories were run with the help of machines the slave did not have importance in northern states. Moreover, Northerners had invested heavily in an expansive and varied transportation system that included canals, roads, steamboats, and railroads; in financial industries such as banking and insurance; and in a large communications network that featured inexpensive, widely available newspapers, magazines, and books, along with the telegraph.

By contrast, the Southern economy was based principally on large farms (plantations) that produced commercial crops such as cotton and that relied on slaves as the main labour force. Rather than invest in factories or railroads as Northerners had done, Southerners invested their money in slaves. They believed the slaves were the

basis of their success and were against the abolishment of slave trade.

The price of cotton, the South's defining crop, had skyrocketed in the 1850s, and the value of slaves - who were, after all, property - rose commensurately. By 1860 the per capita wealth of Southern whites was twice that of Northerners, and three-fifths of the wealthiest individuals in the country were Southerners. The number of immigrants to the north from south were high as economic opportunities were bright in northern states.

### 5.1.2 Slave system

The institution of slavery is older than United States government. Slaves were first introduced to America in 1619 by the Dutch to the North American colony of Jamestown, Virginia. During the early colonial period all the colonies permitted slavery. Most Northern slaves worked as house servants, while Southern slaves worked on plantations. The slaves provided a cheap labour force to produce and cultivate lucrative crops such as tobacco. Some historians estimate that 6 to 7 million slaves were imported to the New World during the 18th century alone, depriving the African continent of some of its healthiest and ablest men and women. After the American Revolution, many colonists - particularly in the North, where slavery was not an integral part of their economy - began to link the oppression of Black slaves to their own oppression by the British, and called for slavery's abolition. However, after the war's

end, the new U.S. Constitution enshrined slavery, counting each slave as three-fifths of a person for the purposes of taxation and representation in Congress and guaranteeing the right to repossess any “person held to service or labour.”

The system of slavery began to end in America by the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. There was a disdain against the system in states. As a result the slave system was abolished in northern states by the act of 1787. It permitted that fugitive slaves could be arrested. When the slave territory of Missouri sought statehood in 1818, Congress debated for two years before arriving upon the Missouri Compromise of 1820.

### **5.1.2.1 Missouri Compromise, (1820)**

The Missouri Compromise was a legislative agreement between the North and the South, passed by the U.S. Congress in 1820, that allowed Missouri to enter the Union as the 24th state in 1821. This compromise marked the beginning of an extended sectional struggle over the expansion of slavery into new territories - a conflict that would ultimately culminate in the American Civil War. The compromise sought to maintain a balance of power between free and slave states by admitting Missouri as a slave state while simultaneously admitting Maine as a free state. Additionally, it established the 36°30' parallel as the dividing line: slavery would be prohibited in territories north of this latitude, except for Missouri.

Missouri first applied for statehood in 1817, and by early 1819, Congress was debating enabling legislation to authorise the drafting of a state constitution. The issue became contentious when representative James Tallmadge of New York introduced the Tallmadge Amendment on February 13, 1819. This amendment proposed banning the further importation of enslaved people into

Missouri and granting gradual emancipation to those already enslaved, freeing them upon reaching the age of 25. The amendment passed in the House of Representatives, where the more populous North held a majority, but failed in the Senate, which was evenly divided between free and slave states. This deadlock led to a political crisis, as Southern legislators viewed the amendment as an attack on their economic and social institutions, while Northern lawmakers saw slavery's expansion as a moral and political threat. Unable to reach an agreement, Congress adjourned without resolving the Missouri question, intensifying sectional tensions that foreshadowed future national conflicts over slavery.

When it reconvened in December 1819, Congress was faced with a request for statehood from Maine. At the time, there were 22 states, half of them free states and half of them slave states. The Senate passed a bill allowing Maine to enter the Union as a free state and Missouri to be admitted without restrictions on slavery.

In the 1850s, a growing number of Northerners, motivated by moral concerns or a desire to safeguard free labour, came to see the abolition of slavery as essential. Meanwhile, White Southerners feared that restricting its expansion would inevitably lead to its demise. As the decade progressed, tensions between the two sides deepened, and politicians found it increasingly difficult to resolve the conflict through compromise.

### **5.1.2.2 The Kansas-Nebraska Act**

The Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed by the U.S. Congress on May 30, 1854. It allowed people in the territories of Kansas and Nebraska to decide for themselves whether or not to allow slavery within their borders. The Act served to repeal the Missouri Compromise of 1820 which prohibited slavery north of a designated line



The Kansas-Nebraska Act infuriated many in the North who considered the Missouri Compromise to be a long-standing binding agreement. In the pro-slavery South it was strongly supported.

After the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed, pro-slavery and anti-slavery supporters rushed to settle in Kansas in order to affect the outcome of the first election held there after the law went into effect. Pro-slavery settlers carried the election but were charged with fraud by anti-slavery settlers, and the results were not accepted by them. The anti-slavery settlers held another election, however pro-slavery settlers refused to vote. This resulted in the establishment of two opposing legislatures within the Kansas territory.

Violence soon erupted, with the anti-slavery forces led by John Brown. The territory earned the nickname “bleeding Kansas” as the death toll rose. President Franklin Pierce, in support of the pro-slavery settlers, sent in Federal troops to stop the violence and disperse the anti-slavery legislature. Another election was called. Once again pro-slavery supporters won and once again they were charged with election fraud.

As a result, Congress did not recognise the constitution adopted by the pro-slavery settlers and Kansas was not allowed to become a state. Eventually, however, anti-slavery settlers outnumbered pro-slavery settlers and a new constitution was drawn up. On January 29, 1861, just before the start of the Civil War, Kansas was admitted to the Union as a free state.

### 5.1.3 Election of Abraham Lincoln as President

When Abraham Lincoln, the candidate of the explicitly anti-slavery Republican Party, won the 1860 presidential election, seven

Southern states (South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas) carried out their threat and seceded, organising as the Confederate States of America.

On March 4th 1861 Lincoln became the president of USA. The states which separated from union elected Davis Jefferson as their president. After his election Lincoln proclaimed that there would be no break up from the union and her unity and integrity would be maintained at all cost. Abraham Lincoln had negotiations with Stephen Douglas in which he emphasised the importance of abolishing slavery but Douglas could not be convinced.

In the early morning hours of April 12, 1861, rebels opened fire on Fort Sumter, at the entrance to the harbour of Charleston, South Carolina.

The civil war began in 12th April 1861 and ended in 26th May 1865. Northern states called it as great revolt. Southern states called it as war of the states. But popularly it was known as the Civil War of America. Within weeks, four more Southern states (Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina) left the Union to join the Confederacy. Both the parties had equal resources and had underestimated the power of other. They were expecting an easy victory over each other but it lasted for four years.

It seemed that the 23 states that remained in the Union after secession were more than a match for the 11 Southern states. Furthermore, the Federals had at their command a 30-to-1 superiority in arms production, a 2-to-1 edge in available manpower, and a great preponderance of commercial and financial resources. The Union also had a functioning government and a small but efficient regular army and navy.

The Southern armies had the advantage of fighting on interior lines, and their military tradition had bulked large in the history of the United States before 1860. Moreover, the long Confederate coastline of 3,500 miles (5,600 km) seemed to defy blockade, and the Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, hoped to receive decisive foreign aid and intervention. Confederate soldiers were fighting to achieve a separate and independent country based on what they called "Southern institutions," the chief of which was the institution of slavery.

Of the two rival commanders in chief, most people in 1861 believed Jefferson Davis to be abler than Lincoln. Davis was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, a hero of the Mexican-American War, a capable secretary of war under Pres. Franklin Pierce, and a U.S. representative and senator from Mississippi. Lincoln on the other hand had served in the Illinois state legislature and as an undistinguished one-term member of the U.S. House of Representatives - could boast of only a brief period of military service in the Black Hawk War.

Davis has many fine qualities, including dignity, firmness, determination, and honesty, but his flaws led to his downfall his excessive pride, hypersensitivity to criticism, poor political skills, and tendency to micromanage. He engaged in extended petty quarrels with generals and cabinet members. He also suffered from ill health throughout the conflict. Davis's effectiveness was further hampered by a political system. Davis himself also filled the position of General in Chief of the Confederate armies until he named Robert E. Lee.

On the other hand, to the astonishment of many, Lincoln grew in stature with time and experience, and by 1864 he had become a consummate politician and war director. Lincoln matured into a remarkably effective

president because of his great intelligence, communication skills, humility, sense of purpose, sense of humour, fundamentally moderate nature, and ability to remain focused on the big picture.

To crush the rebellion and reestablish the authority of the Federal government, Lincoln had to direct his blue-clad armies to invade, capture, and hold most of the vital areas of the Confederacy. His grand strategy was based on Scott's so-called Anaconda Plan, a design that evolved from strategic ideas discussed in messages between Scott and McClellan on April 27, May 3, and May 21, 1861.

#### 5.2.4 The First and Second Bull Run

The battle of Bull Run started in July 1861, when 30,000 federal troops marched from Washington.D.C.to attack confederate troops forces, positioned near Bull Run Creek at Manassas, which was led by General Thomas Jackson, and Irvin McDowell.

Just as the Union seemed at the head of a victory, the Confederate forces attacked, and sent the Union back to Washington. The battle resulted 280 dead, 1000 wounded, and 1200 missing, a total number of 2,680 casualties. By contrast, the Southern army had suffered from 800 killed, 1,000 wounded, and dozens of missing. General Winfield Scott was replaced by General McClellan.

McClellan invaded Virginia in March 1862. The Union army was defeated again due to the tactical strategy of General Lee. After five months, McClellan withdrew to the Potomac where he was replaced by John Pope. Encouraged by the disorganisation and changes of generals, Lee attacked Pope's army again in northern Virginia. The Union was defeated and sent back to Bull Run, pained and shamed by a second defeat.

#### 5.2.4.1 The Battle of Antietam

The battle of Antietam was a turning point in later events. The Union celebrated its first victory at Antietam on September 17, 1862. The battle of Antietam was the first battle on the Union soil. It began when Confederate forces marched to Washington, positioned in Maryland. The Confederate army was led by General Robert. E, Lee, while the Union was under the command of General McClellan. Lee lost his tactical plan, and McClellan technically won the battle. No war in America would repeat the day of Antietam, “it was one of the bloodiest days in the history of America. The battle of Antietam resulted in more than 12,000 federal and 11,000 Confederates casualties a total number of 23,000 Union and Confederate dead. Encouraged by the Union triumph, Lincoln revealed his intention to emancipate slaves, but the emancipation proclamation was not heard until 1863.

#### 5.2.4.2 The Battle of Fredericksburg

The Battle of Fredericksburg, fought from December 11 to December 15, 1862, was one of the most decisive Confederate victories during the American Civil War. The Union army, under President Abraham Lincoln’s directive, aimed to capture Richmond, Virginia, the Confederate capital. However, this objective proved to be far more challenging than anticipated.

After the Battle of Antietam, Lincoln appointed General Ambrose Burnside to lead the Army of the Potomac, hoping for a swift and strategic offensive. Burnside planned to cross the Rappahannock River at Fredericksburg, outmaneuver Confederate General Robert E. Lee, and advance toward Richmond. However, logistical delays, including late-arriving pontoon bridges, allowed Lee ample time to fortify his defensive positions on Marye’s Heights and

along key ridges. On December 13, Burnside launched a series of frontal assaults against the heavily entrenched Confederate forces. Despite overwhelming numerical superiority, Union troops faced devastating artillery and rifle fire. The attacks, particularly against the Confederate positions at the stone wall on Marye’s Heights, resulted in catastrophic losses.

By December 14, Burnside requested a temporary ceasefire to tend to his wounded and reevaluate his strategy. Realising the futility of further attacks, he withdrew his forces on December 15, marking a decisive Confederate victory. The battle resulted in approximately 12,600 Union casualties compared to 5,300 Confederate losses.

The Union’s failure at Fredericksburg dealt a severe blow to Northern morale and increased political pressure on Lincoln’s administration. Burnside, widely criticised for his costly tactics, was soon replaced as Commander of the Army of the Potomac. Meanwhile, Lee’s triumph reinforced Confederate confidence, though it would ultimately be followed by intense battles in the coming years.

#### 5.2.4.3 Emancipation Proclamation

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, a landmark declaration that stated, “*All persons held as slaves in rebel areas are, and henceforward shall be, free.*” Lincoln firmly insisted on the emancipation of enslaved people, further asserting, “*I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated states and parts of states are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, shall recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.*”

While the Emancipation Proclamation was a crucial step toward ending slavery, it did not immediately free all enslaved individuals. The order applied only to enslaved people in Confederate-controlled territories, meaning that slavery remained legal in the Border States that had not seceded - Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, Delaware, and the newly formed West Virginia. Furthermore, the Proclamation allowed both free African Americans and formerly enslaved individuals to enlist in the Union Army, significantly bolstering the Union's war efforts.

The formal abolition of slavery came with the Thirteenth Amendment, ratified in December 1865. This amendment constitutionally prohibited slavery and involuntary servitude throughout the United States, except as a punishment for crime. However, the process of emancipation had begun even before Lincoln's proclamation. In April 1862, Congress passed the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act, which freed all enslaved individuals in the nation's capital. Slaveholders in Washington, D.C., were compensated up to \$300 per freed person, marking one of the few instances in U.S. history where slave owners received government reimbursement for emancipation.

As the Union Army advanced, it gained control over strategically important regions, including parts of Louisiana (such as New Orleans), Norfolk in Virginia, and several Border States. Although the Union successfully ended slavery in most of these areas, Kentucky and Delaware remained exceptions until the Thirteenth Amendment was enacted.

#### 5.2.4.4 The Battle of Vicksburg

The Battle of Vicksburg played a pivotal role in the American Civil War, significantly shaping the outcome of the conflict between the Union and the Confederacy. Recognising Vicksburg's strategic importance, General

Ulysses S. Grant devised a bold new plan to capture the city by approaching from the south. His troops executed a challenging maneuver, marching from the west bank of the Mississippi River to the east at Biff Bluff. The campaign involved engagements at Raymond and Champion Hill, both of which were critical in weakening Confederate defenses.

Grant's primary objective was to sever the Confederacy's access to vital supplies by gaining control of the Mississippi River. Over 20 days, his forces covered more than 200 miles, engaging in five major battles with a force of approximately 43,000 men. The decisive confrontation came when Grant's army, along with forces under General William Tecumseh Sherman, laid siege to Vicksburg. Facing relentless attacks and dwindling supplies, Confederate General John C. Pemberton was eventually forced to surrender on July 4, 1863.

The fall of Vicksburg marked a devastating blow to the Confederacy, effectively splitting its territory and severing Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas from the rest of the Southern states. The Union's victory secured full control of the Mississippi River, fulfilling a crucial component of its Anaconda Plan to strangle the South's resources. The battle resulted in approximately 29,000 Confederate soldiers surrendering, with nearly 30,000 taken as prisoners. Casualty estimates indicate that the Union suffered around 4,535 losses, while Confederate casualties, including deaths and surrenders, numbered approximately 31,277.

#### 5.2.4.5 The Battle of Gettysburg

The Battle of Gettysburg, one of the bloodiest and most pivotal confrontations in American history, began in the town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Fought between July 1 and July 3, 1863, it marked the first major battle in a free state between the

Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, led by General Robert E. Lee, and the Union Army of the Potomac, commanded by Major General George G. Meade.

Lee's strategic objective was to deal a decisive blow to the Union forces, weaken Northern morale, and potentially capture a significant Northern city, thereby pressuring the Union government into peace negotiations. The battle commenced when Confederate forces launched an assault on Union troops positioned near Gettysburg in southern Pennsylvania. General A.P. Hill's Third Corps sent two divisions across the Chambersburg Pike, engaging Union forces in a fierce encounter. As the conflict escalated, both armies rapidly concentrated their troops in and around Gettysburg.

Despite being initially outnumbered, the Union forces managed to hold their ground. On the second day, July 2, Confederate troops launched repeated assaults on Union defensive positions, including Little Round Top, Cemetery Hill, and Culp's Hill. However, despite intense fighting, the Confederate attacks were repelled, failing to break the Union lines.

The final and most infamous engagement occurred on July 3, when Lee ordered a massive frontal assault known as Pickett's Charge. At approximately 3:00 PM, thousands of Confederate soldiers advanced across an open field toward the well-fortified Union center on Cemetery Ridge. The attack resulted in catastrophic losses for the Confederacy, as Union artillery and infantry fire devastated the advancing troops. Lee's offensive was decisively repulsed, marking the end of Confederate hopes for a breakthrough.

Recognising the failure of his campaign, Lee was forced to retreat on July 4, leading his army back to Virginia. The defeat at Gettysburg proved to be a turning point in the Civil War, halting the Confederacy's northern

invasion and significantly weakening its ability to wage war. Although the conflict would continue for nearly two more years, Lee's army never again launched a major offensive in Union territory.

### 5.2.5 Consequences

The American post-war era (1865-1877) was one of the most challenging periods in the history of America. The post-war era marked the restoration of the state and the building the nation.

#### 1. The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

On April 14, 1865, John Wilkes Booth, a fervent Confederate sympathiser and embittered Southern actor, assassinated President Abraham Lincoln while he was attending a performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. Lincoln's assassination was met with profound mourning across the nation, particularly in the North. However, for both Northerners and Southerners, the tragedy underscored the deep divisions that remained even after the Civil War's conclusion. The already complex issue of post-war reconstruction was further delayed as the nation struggled to determine the path forward.

Following Lincoln's death, Vice President Andrew Johnson assumed the presidency in 1865. Johnson, a Southerner from Tennessee, was notable for being the only senator from a Confederate state who remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War. In May 1865, Johnson issued an Amnesty Proclamation, which aimed to continue elements of Lincoln's lenient Reconstruction policies. His plan granted pardons to most former Confederates who took an oath of allegiance to the Union and restored their confiscated property, with some exceptions for high-ranking Confederate officials and wealthy landowners. However, Johnson's

leniency toward the former Confederacy and his reluctance to support greater rights for freed African Americans brought him into direct conflict with the Radical Republicans in the Congress.

The political struggle between President Johnson and the Republican-controlled Congress intensified in 1866. Seeking to reshape Reconstruction on their terms, Congressional Republicans introduced constitutional amendments to secure civil rights and redefine citizenship. This period saw the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, and the drafting of the Fourteenth Amendment, which granted citizenship and equal protection under the law to all individuals born or naturalised in the United States. These amendments were central to reconstruction and aimed to restore the Union on the principles of equality and federal authority over the Southern states. However, Johnson's opposition to these measures led to an escalating power struggle, ultimately resulting in his impeachment in 1868, though he narrowly avoided removal from office

## 2. The Thirteenth Amendment

After more than two years following President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, the United States Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment, a groundbreaking legislative act that fundamentally transformed the nation's legal and social framework. Officially

adopted and ratified in December 1865, this amendment permanently abolished slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime, ensuring that the constitutional framework of the United States unequivocally rejected the institution of slavery.

## 3. The Fourteenth Amendment

The Republican second amendment was the fourteenth amendment. The 14<sup>th</sup> amendment was one of the most prominent amendments in the Reconstruction period. The amendment came in July 1868. Improving the life of Blacks was not accepted by Southerners, and it caused violence against Blacks. The issue took place in Memphis, Tennessee in May 1866. The incident occurred when whites killed over 46 blacks, and burnt a hundred of their churches, homes, and schools. The incident was effectively superseded by the U.S. Congress that reacted by passing this Amendment to the states for ratification.

The 14 amendments gave citizenship to all people born or naturalised in the United States. In addition, the amendment declared that no state under any law could interfere in one's life, liberty and property. The amendment also proclaimed an equal protection of citizens, especially the freedmen. Alternatively, it contributed to the abolishment of slavery. The Amendment also insisted that the privileges of citizenship were and will last as natural right for the freedmen.

## Recap

- ◆ The Civil War (1861-65) was a social and military conflict between the United States of America and the Confederate States of America in the South
- ◆ Two immediate triggers: the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln, and the resulting secession of 7 Southern states
- ◆ Combat began on 12 April 1861 at Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina
- ◆ The war dragged on until 26 May 1865, when the last major Confederate army surrendered
- ◆ More than 620,000 people died as a result of the conflict, and property damage was estimated at \$5 billion
- ◆ In the end, the victory of the United States meant the preservation of the Union and the abolition of slavery with the 13th Amendment (1865)
- ◆ Gettysburg Address, world-famous speech delivered by Pres. Abraham Lincoln at the dedication (November 19, 1863) of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

## Objective Questions

1. What was the first southern state to secede from the United States?
2. What was the Anaconda Plan?
3. Whose military genius and personality is often credited with holding the Confederate Army together?
4. Who formed groups to help the Union Soldiers that later became the Red Cross?
5. Who assassinated Abraham Lincoln?
6. What incident marked the beginning of the American Civil war?
7. What was the first ever strategic battle plan for the Northern states?
8. Which battle marked the end of the Civil War?

9. Name the legislative action that freed slaves in the South and enabled them to join the Union's armed forces.
10. Name the amendment that guaranteed civil and legal rights to African.
11. Who was the president of the Confederate States of America during the war?

## Answers

1. South Carolina
2. A military strategy for the Union
3. Robert E. Lee
4. Clara Barton
5. John Wilkes Booth
6. Confederate troops attacked Fort Sumter
7. Anaconda Plan
8. The Battle of Palmito Ranch
9. The Emancipation Proclamation
10. The Fourteenth Amendment
11. Jefferson Davis

## Assignments

1. Discuss the socio-economic differences between the Northern and Southern states of America that contributed to the outbreak of the Civil War.
2. Examine the role of slavery in the development of the Southern economy.

3. How did the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 contribute to the secession of the Southern states?
4. Analyse the impact of the Battle of Bull Run on the morale of both the Union and Confederate armies.
5. Evaluate the significance of the battle of Antietam in the context of the American Civil War. How did this battle shift the momentum in favour of the Union?

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## Suggested Reading

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# Unification of Italy

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ analyse the background of the growth of Nationalism in Europe
- ◆ understand the political, cultural and economic background of Italian nationalism
- ◆ understand the major events leading to the unification of Italy
- ◆ understand identify the primary leaders of the unification of Italy

### Prerequisites

Across a span of more than 3,000 years, Italian history has been marked by episodes of temporary unification and long separation, of intercommunal strife and failed empires. The archaeological records stretch back tens of thousands of years, Italian history begins with the Etruscans, an ancient civilization that rose between the Arno and Tiber rivers. The Etruscans were uprooted in the 3rd century BCE by the Romans, who soon became the chief power in the Mediterranean world and whose empire stretched from India to Scotland by the 2nd century CE. The Roman Empire fell in the 5th century CE after a succession of barbarian invasions through which Huns, Lombards, Ostrogoths, and Franks - mostly previous subjects of Rome - seized portions of Italy. Italy then saw the emergence of the city-states. Many of those city-states flourished during the Renaissance era, which was marked by the significant intellectual, artistic, and technological advances but also by the warfare between states loyal to the pope and those loyal to the Holy Roman Empire. Italian unification came in the 19th century, when a liberal revolution installed Victor Emmanuel II as king.



# Keywords

Renaissance, Congress of Vienna, Napoleon, Felice Orsini, Mazzini, Count Cavour, Garibaldi, Victor Emmanuel

## Discussion

### 5.2.1 Discussions

Nationalism and liberalism stimulated the revolutionary changes of 1848 throughout the Central Europe, especially in Italy, Germany and the whole of the Austrian Empire. The liberal revolutionaries in these countries, chiefly among the middle classes had attempted to bring about two important changes, that is, creation of a unified national state for each nationality and the establishment of a constitutional and parliamentary government in each state, with guarantees of personal liberty. With the revival of conservatism in the 1850's, the liberal movement in the Central Europe received a set-back. However, in spite of this initial setback, liberalism began to gain ground among a considerable minority. During the two decades from 1850 to 1870, this minority increased in number and influence. Gradually, liberalism became such a powerful current that it succeeded in achieving the unification of Italy.

### 5.2.2 Background

For many centuries, Italy was nothing more than a geographical expression. It was a patchwork of small states jealous of one another. Never, since the days of the Roman Empire, was the Italian Peninsula been effectively united under one rule. Various attempts to bring the Italian Peninsula under one government had ended in failure. The division of Italy among the foreign dynasties was one of the chief hurdles in the path of

the Italian unification. Austria had occupied the northern part of Italy. The Princes of the Hapsburg family of Austria ruled over the duchies of Parma, Modena and Tuscany. In the south, the Kingdom of Sicily and Naples was under the Bourbon dynasty. Central Italy was under the temporal authority of the Pope. Apart from the political division of the peninsula, the Italians themselves had not yet developed a full sense of national consciousness. Different regions and towns of Italy had developed their own distinct traditions which led to local jealousies which in turn checked national growth. Historian and politician Metternich wrote that, "*In Italy, the provinces were against provinces, towns against towns, families against families and men against men*".

### 5.2.2.1 The Austrian Empire

The biggest and immediate hurdle on the path of the unification of Italy was the Austrian Empire. The state of Lombardy and Venetia, which were parts of Italy, were in the possession of Austria. Italy could never think of unification if Austria was not moved out of those states. The Austria could only be removed with a huge and powerful army and the support of foreign powers and Italy did not have either of them.

Another major impediment was the dominance of reactionary rulers across the fragmented Italian states. These rulers adhered to the principles of absolute monarchy and firmly believed in the divine right of

kingship. Following the defeat of Napoleon and the restoration of conservative rule in 1815, any attempt at rebellion or nationalist uprisings was systematically suppressed. Austrian Chancellor Klemens von Metternich played a pivotal role in maintaining the status quo, frequently intervening to assist Italian monarchs in crushing revolutionary movements. His staunch opposition to liberal and nationalist ideals further reinforced the grip of reactionary forces, making the path to unification even more challenging.

### 5.2.3 The Congress of Vienna and the Conservative Order of Europe

After Napoleon had finally been defeated in 1815, the European monarchs breathed a huge sigh of relief. After all, the French Revolution and the development it had triggered had dominated European politics for more than a quarter of a century. Napoleon had not always been a passionate advocate of the French Revolution, yet his conquest and occupation of Europe had contributed substantially to the spread of its ideas – liberty, equality, and fraternity – all over the continent.

Having defeated Napoleon, the monarchs of Europe were eager to ensure the restoration of peace and order. They were particularly anxious about the legacy of the ideas of the revolution, and therefore the governments of Europe were determined to follow policies that provided stability and squelch any kind of political turmoil. The Congress of Vienna, a conference of diplomats from all over Europe, tried to settle political and territorial questions that had arisen from the Napoleonic Wars. The Congress began in 1814 when Napoleon was still exiled on Elba.

Assembly that reorganised Europe after the Napoleonic Wars. The powers of the Quadruple Alliance had concluded the

Treaty of Chaumont just before Napoleon's first abdication and agreed to meet later in Vienna. There they were joined by Bourbon France as a major participant and by Sweden and Portugal; many minor states also sent representatives.

The main leaders were Klemens, prince von Metternich, representing Francis II (Austria); Alexander I (Russia); Frederick William III and Karl August, prince von Hardenberg (Prussia); Viscount Castlereagh (Britain); and Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand (France).

In the beginning, delegates could not agree on any solutions which helped Napoleon re-establish his rule in France after his return from exile. However, after Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo in 1815, the Congress of Vienna took up its work again. The countries that had made the most vital contributions to defeat Napoleon were Russia, Great Britain, Prussia, and Austria. Their representatives at the Congress were Tsar Alexander I of Russia, Lord Castlereagh – foreign secretary of Great Britain – King Frederick William III of Prussia, and Prince Klemens von Metternich – chief minister of Austria and chairman of the conference. Although inferior to the royal members of the Congress in rank, Metternich was the chief architect of the policies outlined by the Congress.

Therefore, Charles de Talleyrand, representative of King Louis XVIII of France, also played an important part at the Congress. The Congress of Vienna was guided by certain principles, one being the idea of legitimacy. It was Metternich's firm belief that it was necessary to restore the legitimate monarchs who would preserve traditional institutions in order to re-establish peace and stability in Europe. Consequently, the Bourbon dynasty returned to power not only in France, but also in Spain and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

A number of rulers returned to their thrones in the German and Italian states as well. Elsewhere, however, the principle of legitimacy was largely ignored because of the second, more practical principle at the Congress: the idea of compensation and the balance of power. The victorious powers soon started quarrelling over the spoils, which is illustrated by the way the Congress treated Poland. Napoleon had created the Grand Duchy of Warsaw from Prussia's Polish territory and then had given it to his ally, the King of Saxony. Now Russia, regarding itself as the power which had contributed most to Napoleon's military defeat, claimed this territory. Prussia agreed to this proposal on condition that Saxony would be given to Prussia. The other victorious great powers, Austria and Great Britain, were concerned about this Russo-Prussian deal looming on the horizon. Austria did not want Prussia to acquire Saxony because it feared that this would make Prussia too strong in German affairs. Great Britain was anxious about Russia becoming too powerful.

Then Talleyrand suggested a compromise which could be accepted by the rivalling powers. Prussia was compensated for the loss of its Polish territory by being given two-fifths of Saxony, Westphalia, and most of the left bank of the Rhine with Cologne, Trier and Koblenz. Austria was compensated for its loss of the Austrian Netherlands by receiving the two wealthy northern Italian provinces of Lombardy and Venetia. At the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, Russia was granted control over three-quarters of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, where it established a new Polish kingdom, known as Congress Poland. Congress Poland was guaranteed its independence, but in reality, the kingdom remained under Russian control. In addition to large parts of Poland, Russia had already won Finland as a result of war with Sweden. Sweden, in return, received Norway from Denmark. Thus, Sweden was rewarded for

having fought against Napoleon, whereas Denmark was punished for having allied with the French. Great Britain did not obtain any territories on the European continent, but gained some possessions overseas, among them Helgoland and Malta.

A further major aim of the Congress of Vienna was to prevent France from threatening the rest of continental Europe again. However, if the principle of the balance of power was to stabilise Europe and to prevent a further large-scale European war, the Congress had to make sure that France would not be weakened too much. Therefore, France was reduced to the boundaries of 1792 and had to pay compensation to formerly occupied countries for damages the Napoleonic Wars had brought to them. In retrospect, the Congress of Vienna can be regarded as a success with regard to its major objectives: legitimacy and the balance of power. The territorial reshuffling of Europe did indeed ensure political stability and peace in Europe. However, the diplomats did not take account of the feelings of the people who lived in the territories that changed hands.

The Congress reduced France to its 1789 borders. A new kingdom of Poland, under Russian sovereignty, was established. the Kingdom of the Netherlands acquired Belgium, Prussia gained territory along the Rhine River, and the Italian kingdom acquired Genoa. The German states were joined loosely in a new German Confederation, subject to Austria's influence. For its part in the defeat of Napoleon, Britain acquired valuable colonies, including Malta, the Cape of Good Hope, and Ceylon. The Vienna settlement was the most comprehensive treaty that Europe had ever seen, and the configuration of Europe established at the congress lasted for more than 40 years. The congress of Vienna unanimously decided to dissolve the country of Italy formed by Napoleon. Thus, Italy was divided into 8

states. Piedmont, Lombardy, Venetia, Parma, Modena, Tuscany, papal states and Naples. Modena and Tuscany were given to Austria, ruled by Austrian princes. Lombardy and Venetia under direct control of Austria. king of Naples was also given his allegiance to Austria. Piedmont under house of savoy. papal states under Pope.

### 5.2.3.1 Conservative Order

In 1789, the French Revolution initiated an era of political turmoil and war throughout Europe that lasted for more than a quarter of a century. In 1815, the Congress of Vienna ushered in a time of reaction. This means that those in power did not only oppose progress; they even wanted to turn back the hands of time and to return to the conditions prior to 1789.

In large parts of Europe – e. g. in Spain, the Two Sicilies, and the states of northern Italy – the reinstated rulers abolished the constitutions that had been introduced during Napoleon's rule. Absolutism was re-established as if nothing had happened. However, the problem for the reactionaries was that, in reality, the whole matter was not that simple because Napoleon's conquests had led to the spread of new political ideas and eventually also to the rise of nationalism. National feelings were particularly promoted by writers, artists, and intellectuals by emphasising their people's common language, culture, and history. This development was regarded as extremely dangerous by the reactionary powers and had to be suppressed. The Congress of Vienna therefore tried to keep the desire for national unity under control. Many Italians and Poles, for example, had hoped for national states, but their expectations remained unfulfilled. The desire for national unity in Germany came closer to fulfilment. The Congress of Vienna created a new league of German states, the Deutscher Bund (German Confederation).

The German Confederation was an alliance of 38 independent and sovereign states that emerged in the aftermath of the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806. Austria and Prussia were the two German great powers; the other states varied in size. However, many German nationalists were bitterly disappointed since this new political organisation of Germany was nothing like the national state they had dreamed of. Actually, the German Confederation had little power. It had no real executive, and its only central organ was the German Federal Parliament (Bundestag) in Frankfurt am Main. An Austrian delegate always presided over this assembly which needed the consent of all member states to take action, making it virtually powerless.

The Congress of Vienna was not really an answer to the questions of the time. It struck at the symptoms rather than deal with the causes of unrest. There was a lot of tension beneath the surface. As a result, the governments of Europe were still haunted by the idea of revolution. Consequently, the four great powers that had defeated Napoleon – Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Austria – agreed to continue their alliance. The chief purpose of this Quadruple Alliance was to maintain stability in Europe by opposing and – if necessary – fighting any future revolutionary movements. Tsar Alexander I of Russia even went one step further. He believed in absolute monarchy and the divine right of monarchs. To his mind, Christian moral principles and tradition should guide monarchs and were necessary to maintain peace and prevent revolutions. Thus, Orthodox Russia, Catholic Austria, and Protestant Prussia formed the Holy Alliance.

Gradually, all the rulers of Europe joined the alliance except the British king, the Ottoman sultan, and the pope. The members of the Holy Alliance derived their right of intervention against all liberal and nationalist

movements from their responsibility to God. However, the Holy Alliance's significance was mostly symbolic. The Quadruple Alliance was far more practical and developed into what was called the "Concert of Europe." It aimed at maintaining peace and the status quo in Europe. According to the Concert of Europe, these aims could only be achieved by preserving the balance of power created by the Congress of Vienna. France was admitted in 1818 when it had fulfilled the terms of the peace settlements. The Concert of Europe held periodic conferences and lasted until 1848.

### 5.2.3.3 The Metternich System

Not only did Prince Metternich play a vital role at the Congress of Vienna, but he also strongly influenced European politics until 1848. That is why the 30 years after the Congress of Vienna are called the "Age of Metternich." Metternich firmly believed in absolute monarchy and fiercely opposed constitutions and liberalism.

The movement of liberalism had its roots in the American and French revolutions. Liberals thought that a state must be based on the rights of individuals – e.g. freedom of speech, religion, and the press – and the rule of law.

From Metternich's point of view, these ideas – especially in combination with nationalism – were an enormous threat to the peace and stability the Congress of Vienna had just painstakingly established. Metternich therefore developed a highly efficient system in Austria that was to prevent revolution and to preserve absolutism. His methods were very rigid. He set up a secret police system that helped him spy on potentially revolutionary organisations. Many liberals were imprisoned or exiled. Most states of the German Confederation adapted Metternich's system. This system was efficient and created an atmosphere of

intimidation, prompting people to concentrate on the domestic and – at least in public – the non-political. The strict publication rules and censorship made many writers concern themselves with primarily non-political subjects like historical fiction and country life. Political discussion was usually confined to the home amongst close friends.

The historical period between 1815 and 1848 is also called "Biedermeier." Nevertheless, a number of liberals continued their struggles and some uprisings arose in Europe. Metternich knew that political liberalism could only be fought on an international level. Consequently, he turned the Concert of Europe into an instrument of suppression. Austria, Russia, and Prussia agreed to cooperate in order to quell any attempt aiming at revolution, even in other countries. Britain refused to agree to this principle, arguing that it had never been the intention of the Concert of Europe to interfere in the internal affairs of other states, except in France. Apart from that, Britain was a constitutional monarchy itself and had a political system based on liberal ideas. The people of Britain openly sympathised with other people's trying to dispose of their authoritarian governments. In 1822, Britain withdrew from the Concert of Europe.

### 5.2.4 Repression and Revolts

After 1815, the forces of reaction operated successfully for a time, especially in the Austrian Empire and the German states. Metternich's spies were everywhere, searching for evidence of liberal or nationalist plots. Liberal and national movements in the German states were mostly limited to university professors and students. Burschenschaften were organised throughout Germany, student societies dedicated to pursuing the aim of a free, united Germany. Their ideas and their principles – "Honour, Liberty, Fatherland" – were inspired by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn who had organised

gymnastic clubs (Turnvereine) during the time of the Napoleonic Wars in order to promote the physical fitness of German youth. Jahn encouraged his followers to honour their German heritage and urged them to disturb the lectures of professors whose views were not in accordance with nationalist ideas.

From 1817 to 1819, the Burschenschaften pursued activities that alarmed German governments. At an assembly held at the Wartburg Castle in 1817 (Wartburgfest), the crowd burned books written by conservative authors. When, in 1819, the reactionary playwright August von Kotzebue was assassinated by a radical student, Metternich summoned the leaders of the larger states of the German Confederation to Karlsbad in Bohemia in order to adopt measures known as the “Karlsbad Decrees” (Karlsbader Beschlüsse). These closed the Burschenschaften, established censorship of the press, and placed the universities under strict observation and control. In addition to that, an organisation was formed to search for secret revolutionary activities.

The Karlsbad Decrees also prohibited all political reforms that collided with absolute monarchy. Due to this repression, liberal and national movements went underground all over Europe. In 1820, a revolt in Spain forced the king, Ferdinand VII, to restore the constitution he had just abolished. The four continental members of the Concert of Europe – Austria, Prussia, France, and Russia – intervened and sent a French army to Spain in order to quell the rebellion. In 1823, they reinstated Ferdinand to full power, brutally crushing the revolt and its leaders. However, the Spanish revolt inspired other upheavals.

In the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, revolutionaries forced the government to grant a constitution, but an Austrian army put

down this revolt. The people of Portugal also forced their ruler to accept a constitution. A few years later, however, it was abolished and absolute monarchy was restored. The most important revolt of the 1820s took place in Greece. In 1821, the Greeks revolted against the Turks in order to achieve independence from the Ottoman Empire.

Metternich influenced European rulers to refuse Greek pleas for aid. However, many people throughout Europe openly sympathised with the Greek struggle for freedom and came to the support of the Greeks, either as volunteers or by sending arms. Finally, Russia, Great Britain, and France put the Ottoman sultan under pressure and, in 1829, Greece became an independent state. The successful Greek struggle for independence can be regarded as the first real failure of Metternich’s system in Europe. It showed that the ideas of nationalism and liberalism encouraged by the French Revolution could not be suppressed forever.

### 5.2.5 The Various Plans for Unification

A major difficulty in achieving unification was the prevalence of variety of viewpoints among Italians on the issue of unification of Italy. Like, (i) the Republicans desired to establish a Republic of Italy. The main proponent of this viewpoint was Mazzini. (ii) Another group of patriots was the votary of a Federation headed by a Pope. Geoberti was their leader. (iii) There were Italians who felt strongly for a constitutional monarchy. They wanted to see the king Emmanuel II of Piedmont-Sardinia as the Emperor of a unified Italy under a constitutional monarchy. Hence, there was lack of a common vision for Italians on the question of ideology, which they might collectively adopt to unite their country. Otherwise, it was not possible to unify Italy.

During the early 19th century, several nationalist secret societies emerged in Italy, driven by the desire to achieve independence and unification. Others formed secret societies to work for political change, plotted to overthrow Austrian government in Italy. This movement was termed as Risorgimento. Risorgimento, (Italian: “Rising Again”), 19th-century movement for Italian unification that culminated in the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. The Risorgimento was an ideological and literary movement that helped to arouse the national consciousness of the Italian people, and it led to a series of political events that freed the Italian states from foreign domination and united them politically.

### 5.2.5.1 Lack of National Awakening

There was lack of national awakening among the Italians due to their recent past. The enslavement for number of centuries had made them to reconcile with their plight, which the providence had made them to suffer. Unfortunately, divergent social traditions and religious trends had developed in meantime. The Chancellor Matternich had very confidently declared thus: “In Italy, provinces are against provinces, towns against towns, families against families and men against men.” He had rightly portrayed the situation which Italian patriots were finding quite difficult to salvage.

### 5.2.6 Napoleon’s Contribution to the Unification

A new epoch began, when Napoleon Bonaparte conquered the kingdoms of Austrian and French princes. He even annexed the Papal State. He brought together the city states. Napoleon gave Italy an uniform system of administration. The Italians learnt the French ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. They were introduced to concepts like self-government and freedom of press.

This intensified their sense of patriotism.

As Emperor of France and King of Italy, Napoleon exercised direct control over northern and central Italy, implementing sweeping reforms that profoundly transformed the region. His administration introduced a modern legal framework, with Italian translations of the new legal codes ensuring that jurisprudence became more attuned to individual rights and personal freedoms. One of the most significant changes was the secularisation of property - land previously held under feudal ecclesiastical tenure, particularly by the regular clergy, was expropriated by the state and subsequently sold. Additionally, the last vestiges of feudal rights and jurisdictions were systematically dismantled, fostering a more centralised and uniform legal system.

Infrastructure saw substantial improvements, with an extensive effort to enhance road networks, facilitating trade and communication across the region. Educational reforms strengthened both primary and higher education, promoting literacy and intellectual growth. In return for higher taxation, Italians benefited from a newly established and improved public service network, which accelerated the region’s socio-economic modernisation and laid the groundwork for greater national cohesion. Napoleon’s rule, despite its challenges, played a crucial role in shaping the trajectory of Italy’s future unification by introducing administrative efficiency, legal modernisation, and infrastructural development.

After Napoleon’s defeat, the Congress of Vienna was called in 1815, to rearrange the map of Europe. The national sentiments of Italians were ignored and ‘status quo’ was maintained. Italy was once again divided as she was before the annexation of Napoleon. Austrian and French kings came back to Italian states. The patriots exclaimed “We have no flag, no political name, no rank

among European nations. We have no common centre, no common market, we are dismembered”

### 5.2.6.1 Carbonari

The Carbonari was one of the most influential and widespread secret societies in 19th-century Europe, particularly in Italy and France. They formed branches in most of the cities of Italy. Carbonari means carbon burners. The “Carbonari” (carbon burners), a nationalist society operating in secret, encouraged the growth of nationalism. The Carbonari were liberals promoting the establishment of constitutional monarchies in the Italian states and were angry at the Vienna settlement. They began to lead nationalist revolts in 1820. In 1820 a successful revolt broke out in Spain against Ferdinand VII. Italian nationalist was influenced by these uprisings and decided to rise into revolt.

The First revolt broke out on Naples demanding liberal constitution. It was followed by the people of Piedmont. The rulers of both the state agreed to the demands of forming liberal constitution. These developments worried Austria and Metternich. He called a meeting of allied powers at Libach. in this meeting Metternich was authorised to suppress the revolt. England opposed the decision. Austrian army was sent to Naples and successfully suppressed the revolt. They also defeated the nationalist at Piedmont. Thus, Carbonari was defeated in their first attempt of national unity.

In July 1847, Austrian troops occupied the papal city of Ferrara, a strategic move that heightened tensions in the Italian peninsula. This intervention acted as a catalyst for increased cooperation among Italian rulers, particularly Charles Albert of Savoy, whose relationship with Austria had already been severely strained due to his aspirations for Italian unification. The revolutionary wave that swept across Europe in 1848 first erupted

in Palermo on January 9, setting off a chain reaction across the Italian states.

Under mounting pressure from widespread unrest, Ferdinand II of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies became the first ruler to grant a constitution on January 29, 1848, hoping to appease the revolutionaries. His decision set a precedent, compelling other rulers to follow suit: Grand Duke Leopold II of Tuscany granted a constitution on February 17, Charles Albert of Sardinia issued his own on March 4, and Pope Pius IX reluctantly followed on March 14.

However, the Austrian government remained steadfast in its opposition to revolutionary demands. Rather than conceding to popular pressure, it took decisive action to suppress dissent. Austrian forces reinforced their garrisons in the key territories of Lombardy and Venetia, arrested opposition leaders in Venice and Milan, and cracked down on student-led demonstrations in the university cities of Padua and Pavia. This repressive approach underscored Austria's determination to maintain its grip over its Italian dominions, setting the stage for further conflict and nationalist uprisings.

On March 23 Charles Albert of Sardinia-Piedmont declared war on Austria. After annexing Parma and Modena, whose rulers had been driven out by insurgents, the Piedmontese won a few more victories before suffering reverses. Pius IX, Leopold II, and Ferdinand II, all of whom had initially sent troops to northern Italy to support the Piedmontese army, hastily withdrew their forces. Nevertheless, the Piedmontese army was unable to withstand the Austrian counteroffensive. After a series of defeats, Charles Albert's forces withdrew from Milan. By the terms of the Salasco armistice (August 9, 1848), the Piedmontese army abandoned Lombardy. In Piedmont the new constitution, the Statuto Albertino (Albertine Statute),

remained in force, and democratic ideas survived.

On, March 23, Charles Albert abdicated and went into exile. His successor, Victor Emmanuel II, was granted an honourable armistice because the Austrians did not want a weakened Savoy monarchy that could be exploited to the advantage of its democratic opponents.

### 5.2.6.2 Felice Orsini

In January 1848 Felice Orsini attempted to assassinate Napoleon III. Hoped that this would aid Italian unity. On the night of January 14, 1858, he and two accomplices threw bombs at the carriage of Napoleon and Empress Eugénie as they were going to the opera in Paris; although several persons were killed, the intended victims were unhurt. Orsini was arrested and executed.



Fig 5.2.1 Felice Orsini

The Revolution of 1848-49 brought a brief hope for the unification movement. The revolutionary wave of 1848–1849 saw temporary triumphs of liberal and republican movements across the Italian peninsula. Influenced by nationalist and democratic ideals, Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi proclaimed the Roman Republic in 1849, aiming to establish a democratic government free from papal and foreign

rule. Similarly, in Venice, Daniele Manin led the establishment of the Venetian Republic, emphasising constitutional governance and independence from Austrian domination.

In Sicily and Tuscany, liberal leaders championed constitutional reforms, and briefly, republican governments were formed. Several Italian principalities, including the Papal States and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, also conceded to granting constitutions under revolutionary pressure. However, these liberal governments faced intense opposition from conservative European powers, particularly Austria and France, leading to their eventual suppression. Despite these setbacks, the revolutions of 1848 laid the ideological and political groundwork for the eventual unification of Italy under Piedmont-Sardinia's leadership in the following decades.

### 5.2.7 Leaders of the Unification Movement

#### 5.2.7.1 Joseph Mazzini

He was born in 1805 in Genoa. His father was a professor at the University of Genoa. In his young days Mazzini had joined the Carbonari. He actively participated in the revolt of 1830, for which he was exiled. After his release in 1831, he founded a Society called "Young Italy". His aim was to mobilise the youth to the national movement. He had immense faith in youth power. He told the young men to speak to artisans, labour, workers and farmers, and make them aware of their rights. He wanted to make Italy a nation. He lost faith in Carbonari way of action, which led to weak revolts. He aimed at a strong national action. His pioneer propaganda broadened the political horizon of the Italians. The other schools of thought were - Federalists who believed that Pope should take the leadership and establish an Italian confederation and secondly the

Royalists who believed in the leadership of House of Savoy because it was Italian dynasty and the king was liberal.

### **5.2.7.2 Count Cavour**

Count Cavour was the chief architect of Italian unification. He was born in 1810 in a noble family of Piedmont. He was a student of modern parliamentary government. He believed that westernisation was needed for progress. He was a practical man and studied the Italian question, its problems and possible remedies. He served Piedmont as a member of the parliament and rose to the position of Prime Minister. He brought liberal reforms. He developed transport and communication. He lowered tariffs and taxes. He developed mining, agriculture and industry. He linked Piedmont to Western Europe through commercial treaties. Thus Piedmont emerged as a model state.

### **5.2.7.3 Garibaldi Giuseppe**

Garibaldi was born in Nice in 1807. He was a true supporter of Mazzini and became a member of Young Italy. He participated in a revolt against Piedmont and ran away to America. There he organised a movement of his followers called Red Shirts. He came back and helped Mazzini, to abolish the authority of the Pope. French forces came to Pope's rescue. Garibaldi lost the battle and fled again to America. He returned to Italy and spent a farmer's life in a small island. In 1854 Cavour called him and sought his help to complete the unification under the leadership of Victor Emmanuel, the king of Piedmont. Although Garibaldi supported republicanism, he accepted Emmanuel's leadership, for the sake of his country's unification. He brought his followers to fight the war against Austria in 1859.

In 1860 the patriots of Sicily rebelled against the French king Francis I. They requested for Garibaldi's help. He

immediately sailed to the shores of Marsala with thousand followers. He defeated the king and occupied the whole of Sicily, in the name of Victor Emmanuel. Encouraged by the victory, he entered the main land of Italy, and reached Naples. The king had fled. Without giving a fight, Garibaldi, captured Naples in 1860. He then began to prepare for a march on Rome. To Cavour, the situation seemed full of danger. Rome was under the Pope. It was occupied by a French garrison. Napoleon III was a Catholic and did not want the Pope to be disturbed. Cavour understood that an attack on Rome would mean a war with France. Cavour decided to check Garibaldi's advance. He wanted to keep Garibaldi away. He assured to Napoleon III that Rome would not be attacked, but other areas of Papal state would be captured by Victor. He marched on the Papal areas and captured those. People accepted him as their king. Garibaldi saluted the king, gave him all the areas under him and retired to his home town.

### **5.2.7.4 Victor Emmanuel and Completion of Unification**

Victor Emmanuel was the son of Charles Albert the king of Sardinia - Piedmont. He was fortunate to get the services of Count Cavour. He gave full authority to Cavour to direct the course of the unification. By 1861, all areas except Venetia and Rome were out of the unification. Venetia was held by Austria and Rome by the Pope, with the help of French army, Cavour thought that without Rome, there was no Italy. Over work and extra stress brought his death in 1861. Victor decided to wait for an opportunity to conquer the two areas.

In 1866, a war broke out between Austria and Prussia. Victor made an alliance with Prussia that Italy would fight against Austria and in return Prussia would help Victor to capture Venetia. Prussia won the war and

compelled Austria to surrender Venetia to Italy. Rome alone was out of Italy. In 1870 a war broke between France and Prussia. Napoleon III was compelled to withdraw French troops, from Rome, to be sent for the war. Victor seized the opportunity. Italian

troops marched on Rome in September 1870. Pope retreated into the Vatican. The citizens at Rome voted for joining the unification. Rome was declared the capital of the new and United Italy. Victor Emmanuel was accepted as the king.

## Recap

- ◆ The liberal movement, despite initial setbacks, gradually gained strength and led to the unification of Italy by the 1870s.
- ◆ The unification of Italy faced major hurdles, including Austria's control over Lombardy and Venetia and the reactionary rulers supported by Austrian Chancellor Metternich to suppress revolts.
- ◆ The Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) aimed to restore peace and order in Europe.
- ◆ The Congress of Vienna achieved a compromise by redistributing territories.
- ◆ The German Confederation, comprising 38 sovereign states, lacked real power and disappointed German nationalists.
- ◆ Liberal and national movements in Germany were largely driven by university professors and students
- ◆ The lack of a common ideological vision among Italians, with factions favouring a republic, a papal federation, or a constitutional monarchy, was a major obstacle to Italy's unification
- ◆ Napoleon's conquests and reforms introduced modern ideas and administration in Italy, fostering a sense of patriotism among Italians.
- ◆ The Carbonari, a secret nationalist society, played a key role in promoting liberal ideas and leading nationalist revolts against the Vienna settlement
- ◆ Felice Orsini's failed assassination attempt on Napoleon III in 1858 aimed to inspire support for Italian unity but ended with his arrest and execution
- ◆ Giuseppe Mazzini founded "Young Italy" to inspire the youth and empower the working class in the national movement.

## Objective Questions

1. Who was responsible for creating the Italian peninsula into a nation-state under a constitutional monarchy?
2. In which year Congress of Vienna was held?
3. Who presided the Congress of Vienna?
4. Name the secret society established in Italy for achieving unification.
5. Name the organisation formed by Mazzini.
6. Who was the first king of Unified Italy?
7. Who was the father of Italian Unification?
8. Name the army organised by Garibaldi.
9. Who is identified as the 'Sword of Italian Unification'?
10. Who was the editor of the newspaper *Il Risorgimento* of Italy?

## Answers

1. Cavour
2. 1815
3. Metternich
4. Carbonari
5. Young Italy
6. Victor Emmanuel II
7. Mazzini
8. Red shirts
9. Garibaldi
10. Count Cavour

# Assignments

1. Analyse the political outcomes of the Congress of Vienna and discuss the goals of the reactionary powers in Europe after 1815.
2. Examine the contributions of Napoleon Bonaparte to the unification of Italy.
3. Discuss how the spread of nationalism and liberalism in Europe after the French Revolution led to tensions during the Congress of Vienna.
4. Critically evaluate the effectiveness of Metternich's system in preventing revolutionary movements in Europe.
5. Explore the major revolts in Europe following the Congress of Vienna, such as the Greek War of Independence and the Spanish Revolt.

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# Role of Joseph Mazzini and Count Cavour

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the role of Mazzini and Cavour in the Unification of Italy
- ◆ analyse why Mazzini was called as the father of Italian unification
- ◆ understand the early movements of Italian unification
- ◆ analyse the growth of Cavour as a farsighted statesman and diplomat

### Prerequisites

Joseph Mazzini was an Italian politician, journalist, and activist for the unification of Italy and spearhead of the Italian revolutionary movement. His efforts helped bring about the independent and unified Italy in place of the several separate states, many dominated by foreign powers, that existed until the 19th century. An Italian nationalist in the historical radical tradition and a proponent of social-democratic republicanism, Mazzini helped define the modern European movement for popular democracy in a republican state. Mazzini's thoughts had a very considerable influence on the Italian and European republican movements, in the Constitution of Italy, about Europeanism and more nuanced on many politicians of a later period. Joseph Mazzini launched a nationalist group called Young Italy to fight for unification of Italian states. Joseph Mazzini an Italian patriot, spearheaded a national revolutionary movement. He was an uncompromising republican, who refused to participate in the parliamentary government that was established under the monarchy of the House of Savoy when Italy became unified and independent (1861).



## Keywords

Joseph Mazzini, Young Italy, Count of Cavour, Revolution, Franco-Piedmontese

## Discussion

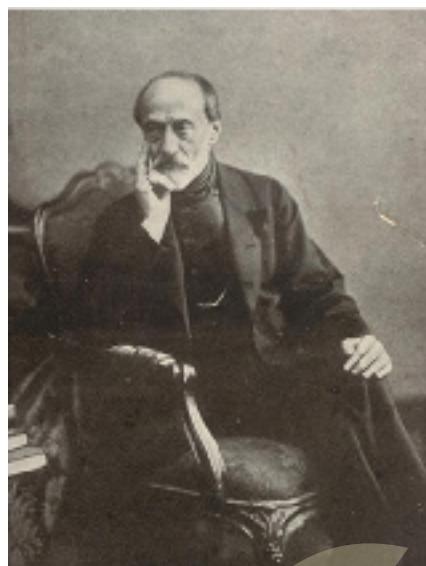


Fig 5.3.1 Joseph Mazzini

### 5.3.1 Joseph Mazzini

Joseph Mazzini was born in June 22, 1805 in Genoa. On graduating in law in 1827, he practiced as a “poor man’s lawyer,” wrote articles for progressive reviews, and hoped to become a dramatist or historical novelist. But his life was already shaping itself differently. His love of freedom led him to join the Carbonari, a secret society pledged to overthrow absolute rule in Italy. In 1830 he was arrested, and interned at Savona, where for three months he reviewed his political beliefs and conceived the outlines of a new patriotic movement to replace the decaying Carbonari.

#### 5.3.1.1 Young Italy Movement

The Young Italy Movement was officially founded by Joseph Mazzini in 1831 in

Marseilles, France. At this time, Italy was a fragmented collection of independent kingdoms, duchies, and papal states, many of which were under foreign control (Austrian and Spanish). The goal of Mazzini was to unite Italy under a single republican government, abolishing the feudal monarchies and foreign control that plagued the Italian peninsula.

Mazzini’s decision to form Young Italy came after his personal exile from the Papal States following his involvement in revolutionary activities. Having witnessed the failure of previous revolutions and seeing the youth as the driving force behind change, Mazzini sought to create an organisation that would promote political action, national consciousness, and revolutionary ideals. The organisation was founded on the principles of nationalism, democracy, and republicanism, and was aimed at the younger generation of Italians who could be mobilised to lead the nation toward its unification.

#### 5.3.1.2 Mazzini’s Vision for a Unified Republican Italy

The vision of Mazzini for Italy was radical for its time. He envisioned a unified Italy free from the domination of foreign powers (especially Austria and France) and the monarchical systems that divided the Italian states. His vision was based on republican principles and not merely the creation of a unified Italian state but a republican, democratic Italy where the people held sovereignty and power.

Mazzini's ideal for Italy was:

- ◆ **A Democratic Republic:** He opposed the restoration of monarchies and wanted to see a republic where sovereignty rested with the people. Mazzini was highly influenced by the French Revolution, particularly the ideals of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and sought to instill these values in the Italian population.
- ◆ **National Unity and Independence:** Mazzini's ultimate goal was to unite the various fragmented regions of Italy (the Kingdom of Naples, the Papal States, the Duchy of Parma, the Kingdom of Sardinia, etc.) into one unified Italian state, governed by the will of its people, independent from foreign influence.
- ◆ **Abolition of Foreign Rule:** Many Italian states were controlled by foreign powers, particularly Austria, which had dominion over northern Italy. Mazzini sought to free Italy from this foreign domination and establish an independent nation where the Italian people could govern themselves without interference.
- ◆ **Civic Nationalism:** Unlike many of his contemporaries who focused primarily on ethnic or cultural unity, Mazzini promoted civic nationalism, arguing that the people of Italy, regardless of regional or cultural differences, should unite under the common goal of republican governance.

### 5.3.1.3 Youth and Popular Mobilisation

Mazzini firmly believed that youth was

the key to the Italian unification process. His Young Italy was created to rally the young men and women of Italy around the cause of national unity. Mazzini emphasised the importance of youth because he believed that young people were the ones most capable of being motivated by ideals, passion, and a sense of duty to their country. The movement aimed to educate and mobilise the youth to become politically conscious, enlightened, and active in the national struggle for liberation.

Elements of his mobilisation strategy included:

- ◆ **Secret Societies and Revolutionary Cells:** Young Italy was a secret society with cells operating across Italy, aimed at avoiding detection by the authorities. The organisation worked as an underground network that spread revolutionary ideals and coordinated uprisings and movements. Its members swore an oath of allegiance to the cause of a unified, republican Italy.
- ◆ **Youth Empowerment:** Mazzini placed great importance on education and civic responsibility, encouraging the youth to engage in intellectual and political activities. He believed that through education, the younger generation could become the agents of change for a republican and unified Italy.
- ◆ **Patriotism and National Consciousness:** The Young Italy Movement worked to instill a sense of patriotism and national identity in the youth, emphasising that Italy should be free to govern itself and that its people should take pride in their national heritage. This was especially important in a time when the

idea of Italian unity was not yet fully realised by many Italians.

♦ **Revolutionary Action:** The Young Italy Movement sought to incite revolutions in Italy. Mazzini believed that the only way to achieve a republic was through popular uprisings. He envisioned a series of revolutions that would overthrow foreign rulers and tyrannical monarchs. While many of these revolts were unsuccessful, they ignited a spirit of rebellion and national pride that later played a crucial role in the broader unification movement.

### 5.3.1.4 Activities and Revolutionary Movements

**1830-1848 Revolutions:** Mazzini played a key role in inspiring the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 in Italy. His Young Italy members were involved in several failed uprisings against both the Austrian Empire and local monarchs. Despite the failure of these uprisings, the revolutionary ideals of Mazzini inspired a new generation of Italians who carried the ideals of nationalism, republicanism, and unity forward.

**1848 Revolution:** The revolutions of 1848, known as the Springtime of Nations, saw the mobilisation of many groups, including Young Italy. Mazzini took an active part in the Roman Republic (1849), a short-lived republic in Rome, before it was crushed by French forces. While the revolutions failed, they set the stage for future efforts and marked a key moment in the struggle for Italian unification.

He founded Young Europe and helped to establish Young Germany, Young Switzerland, and Young Poland, but his three years in Switzerland were unhappy. In 1837 he went to London. England was his real home. He

started to study at the British Museum and wrote for English periodicals. For his livelihood he started a school for Italian boys in London and a newspaper, *Apostolato Popolare* ("Apostleship of the People"), in which he published part of his essay "On the Duties of Man." In 1840, with the help of Giuseppe Lamberti in Paris, he revived Young Italy, mainly for building up a national consciousness among Italians. He wrote innumerable letters to his new agents in Europe and North and South America; he also became acquainted with Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle and other notable people in England. He founded the People's International League in 1847.

Mazzini's ideology of an independent integrated republic spread quickly among large segments of the Italian people. Revolutionary cells formed throughout the Italian peninsula. Joseph Mazzini says, "The republic, as I at least understand it, means association, of which liberty is only an element, a necessary antecedent. It means association, a new philosophy of life, a divine ideal that shall move the world, the only means of regeneration vouchsafed to the human race." Mazzini returned to Italy in the revolutionary year of 1848, when the Milanese drove out their Austrian masters and Piedmont began a war to expel the Austrians from Italy. He served briefly with an irregular force under Giuseppe Garibaldi before returning to England.

Mazzini was again in Italy in 1849. He went to Tuscany first and then to Rome. A revolution had driven out the pope and a republic had been proclaimed. He had believed that the imperial and papal Romes would be followed by a third Rome - a Rome of the people; now his dream had come true. He was acclaimed as a great patriot, was elected a triumvir of the republic, and became the effective head of the government, showing great administrative

talent in ecclesiastical and social reforms. His rule was short-lived. The Pope appealed to Catholic countries for help, and a French army landed in Italy; after heroic resistance, the republic was crushed, and Mazzini left Rome.

During his last years he founded another paper, *Roma del popolo* ("Rome of the People"), which he edited from Lugano, and made plans for an Italian workingmen's congress. He died from pleurisy at Pisa in 1872.

### 5.3.2 Count Cavour



Fig 5.3.2 Count Cavour

#### 5.3.2.1 Early Life

Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour, was born on August 10, 1810, into a noble family in Turin, the capital of the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia. He came from an aristocratic background, which provided him with the privilege of an excellent education. His early life was shaped by a blend of aristocratic traditions and the intellectual currents of the time, particularly the influence of Enlightenment ideas, which emphasised reason, individual rights, and political reform. His upbringing in a noble family and his exposure to progressive ideas laid the foundation for his later political career.

Cavour's formal education took place at the University of Turin, where he studied

mathematics, economics, and political science, disciplines that would profoundly influence his approach to governance. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Cavour did not embrace the traditional path of military service or religious training. Instead, he pursued a path that allowed him to explore the world of diplomacy and economics. His early career was spent in various administrative roles within the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, and he gained valuable experience working with the Sardinian administration.

Throughout his youth, Cavour developed a strong affinity for liberalism and constitutional monarchy, which, over time, became the guiding principles of his political ideology. The Italian Peninsula, at the time of Cavour's early adulthood, was fragmented into several states, with many of them under foreign domination. The political climate of Europe, influenced by the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars and the Congress of Vienna (1815), further shaped his views on the importance of unity and sovereignty for Italy. As he matured, Cavour's commitment to liberal values grew stronger, and he became a main figure in the political landscape of the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia.

In 1835, he began to engage in a fruitful series of enterprises that helped him to accumulate a considerable fortune. He also achieved a certain reputation with his writing. Even without directly facing the question of Italy's future political structure, his writings show social or economic principles that could in no way be reconciled with the prevailing conditions in Italy. Above all, the economic measures and the construction of railroads proposed by Cavour would have transformed the Italy of that period beyond recognition.

During this 15 years he also dedicated his time to sharpening his political ideology. He visited France and England during that time and was attracted to the parliamentary

system of England. In 1842 he formed an association called Association Agraria. This organisation gained much popularity in Sardinia. In 1847 he started the publishing of a newspaper called *Resorgimento*. The aim of his movement was 1. liberty of Italy 2. coordination between people and rulers 3. mutual Cooperation between different rulers of Italy 4. introduction of socio- economic, political and constitutional reforms. He was elected as a member of first parliament of Sardinia in 1848. He was appointed as the minister of agriculture and commerce in 1852.

### 5.3.2.2 Economic and Military Reforms

He was appointed as the Prime Minister of Piedmont and Sardinia in 1852 and remained in the post till 1861. During his time he himself proved as one of the ablest and greatest politician and diplomat in the history of Europe and Italy.

Cavour's tenure as Prime Minister saw a series of economic reforms aimed at modernizing Piedmont-Sardinia. His first priority was to improve the economy by encouraging industrial development and expanding trade networks. He pushed for railway construction, which facilitated internal trade and helped integrate the different regions of Italy. He also worked to modernise agriculture, promoting land reforms and improving agricultural techniques.

In addition to economic reforms, Cavour focused on strengthening the military. A strong, modern military was essential for achieving his goal of unification, as it would be necessary to defend against external threats and to exert pressure on other Italian states and foreign powers. Under his leadership, the Sardinian army was modernised, with new weapons, improved training, and more

efficient organisation.

Cavour also recognised the importance of fostering international support for his unification efforts. He understood that to challenge the foreign powers that had a stake in Italian affairs, he would need to secure diplomatic alliances. Thus, he worked tirelessly to align Piedmont-Sardinia with European powers like France and Britain, who shared common interests in the weakening of Austrian influence in Italy.

### 5.3.2.3 Diplomatic Strategy

Cavour was a master of diplomatic strategy. While his reforms in Piedmont-Sardinia laid the groundwork for Italian unification, he understood that international diplomacy would be key to achieving this goal. The political climate of 19th-century Europe, with the tensions between the major powers of France, Britain, Austria, and Russia, created opportunities for Cavour to advance his agenda.

One of his most significant diplomatic maneuvers was his relationship with Napoleon III of France. Cavour believed that to secure Italian unification, it was essential to have the backing of France, a powerful neighbour that could help challenge Austrian dominance in northern Italy. His alliance with Napoleon III was central to the eventual success of the unification movement. Cavour's diplomatic acumen was evident in how he navigated the shifting alliances and rivalries of the time, leveraging Piedmont-Sardinia's position as a buffer state between Austria and France.

Cavour's involvement in the Crimean War (1853-1856) was another critical element of his diplomatic strategy. By joining the war on the side of Britain and France against Russia, Cavour aimed to enhance the international standing of Piedmont-Sardinia. The war helped Piedmont-Sardinia gain recognition

as a legitimate European power and allowed Cavour to position himself as a leader in the movement for Italian unity.

### 5.3.2.4 The Franco-Piedmontese Alliance

In 1858, Cavour successfully negotiated the Franco-Piedmontese Alliance with Napoleon III, which proved to be a decisive moment in the unification process. The alliance stipulated that France would support Piedmont-Sardinia in the event of war with Austria, and in return, Piedmont-Sardinia would provide French support in the event of future conflicts.

This alliance was pivotal in the Second Italian War of Independence (1859), when France entered the conflict alongside Piedmont-Sardinia against Austria. The war led to the defeat of Austrian forces and the annexation of Lombardy by Piedmont-Sardinia. This victory marked the beginning of the end for Austrian influence in northern Italy, and Cavour's diplomatic strategy had secured a significant gain for the cause of unification.

However, the alliance also required delicate negotiations, as Napoleon III was cautious about appearing too committed to the idea of Italian unification, especially given the potential for political instability in France and the Catholic Church's influence over many Italian regions. Cavour, with his diplomatic skill, was able to manage these concerns and keep the alliance intact, which ultimately helped to secure the northern Italian territories.

### 5.3.2.5 The Role in the 1860s Unification

Cavour's strategic alliances, reforms, and military successes set the stage for the eventual unification of Italy. In 1861, following Cavour's death, the Kingdom of

Italy was officially proclaimed under the monarchy of Victor Emmanuel II, with Cavour's vision for a unified Italy largely realised. However, the unification process was not without challenges.

Following Cavour's death, the annexation of central and southern Italy was carried out, primarily through the efforts of Giuseppe Garibaldi, who played a significant role in the conquest of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Despite Garibaldi's contributions, Cavour's strategic diplomacy laid the groundwork for these later achievements, and it was his vision of a united Italy that inspired both Garibaldi and other unification leaders.

In the early 1860s, the northern and central regions of Italy were unified, but the Papal States remained under the control of the Catholic Church, and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was still to be incorporated into the new Italian state. Cavour's death in 1861 meant that he did not live to see the complete unification of Italy, but his political strategies, reforms, and alliances were instrumental in the success of the broader Risorgimento movement.

### 5.3.3 Ideological Differences: Mazzini's Republicanism vs. Cavour's Constitutional Monarchy

At the core of the differences between Mazzini and Cavour lay their political ideologies. These ideological divides not only reflected their personal convictions but also the broader political climate in Europe during the 19th century.

Giuseppe Mazzini was a staunch advocate of republicanism, believing that the ideal form of government for a united Italy would be a republic founded on the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. For Mazzini, the state should be democratic, and it should be built from the ground up by the will of

the people. His vision was rooted in the Enlightenment ideas of individual rights, and he argued that a republic would be the best vehicle to ensure these ideals. His belief in the power of the people led him to emphasise the importance of national identity, unity, and sovereignty.

On the other hand, Count Camillo di Cavour was a pragmatic politician who believed that a constitutional monarchy was the most practical and stable form of government for a unified Italy. Cavour was deeply influenced by liberalism, but he saw the monarchy of Victor Emmanuel II as a unifying force. His goal was to modernise Italy through constitutional monarchy, which he saw as compatible with liberal reforms. Cavour's vision of a united Italy under the Sardinian monarchy aligned with his broader aim of stabilising the Italian Peninsula through political and economic modernisation. He recognised that the monarchy, with its historical legitimacy and established institutions, would be the cornerstone of the

new Italian state.

This ideological divide between Mazzini and Cavour reflected not just personal preferences but also broader political realities. Mazzini's republicanism was idealistic and revolutionary, while Cavour's constitutional monarchy was pragmatic and gradual. Mazzini believed that the people, driven by their sense of nationalism and justice, should rise up to overthrow the old order. In contrast, Cavour favored a more diplomatic and incremental approach, seeking to align with European powers and gradually incorporate the different Italian states under the crown of Victor Emmanuel II.

Mazzini's focus on mass uprisings and revolutionary action was thus in stark contrast to Cavour's emphasis on diplomatic strategy and military alliances. While Mazzini's method was one of spontaneity and popular rebellion, Cavour's approach was a more calculated, top-down effort that leveraged international support and internal reforms.

## Recap

- ◆ The Young Italy Movement was officially founded by Giuseppe Mazzini in 1831 in Marseilles
- ◆ Mazzini envisioned a unified Italy free from the domination of foreign powers
- ◆ Mazzini opposed the restoration of monarchies and wanted to see a republic where sovereignty rested with the people
- ◆ Mazzini firmly believed that youth was the key to the Italian unification process
- ◆ Young Italy was a secret society with cells operating across Italy
- ◆ Mazzini placed great importance on education and civic responsibility, encouraging the youth to engage in intellectual and political activities

- ◆ Mazzini played a key role in inspiring the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 in Italy
- ◆ Mazzini founded Young Europe
- ◆ Cavour developed a strong affinity for liberalism and constitutional monarchy
- ◆ Cavour's tenure as Prime Minister saw a series of economic reforms aimed at modernising Piedmont-Sardinia
- ◆ Cavour also recognised the importance of fostering international support for his unification efforts
- ◆ One of his most significant diplomatic maneuvers of Cavour was relationship with Napoleon III of France
- ◆ Cavour's strategic alliances, reforms, and military successes set the stage for the eventual unification of Italy

## Objective Questions

1. Who founded the Young Italy Movement?
2. What was the primary goal of the Young Italy Movement?
3. Which principle did Mazzini emphasise in his vision for Italy?
4. Which event marked the downfall of the Roman Republic in 1849, which Mazzini was part of?
5. What was Mazzini's stance on monarchy and republicanism?
6. Who was Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour?
7. What was the primary goal of Cavour's association called 'Resorgimento'?
8. What significant reform did Cavour focus on during his time as Prime Minister?
9. What was Cavour's primary diplomatic strategy to support Italian unification?
10. What was the role of Cavour in the Franco-Piedmontese Alliance of 1858?

## Answers

1. Joseph Mazzini
2. To unite Italy under a republican government
3. A republic based on national unity and civic nationalism
4. The intervention of French troops to restore the Pope
5. He advocated for a republican form of government and opposed monarchies
6. The Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia
7. Freedom of Italy, coordination between people and rulers, and mutual cooperation
8. Encouraging industrial development and modernising agriculture
9. Forming strategic alliances with European powers like France and Britain
10. He negotiated the alliance, securing French support against Austria

## Assignments

1. Examine the ideological differences between Joseph Mazzini and Count Camillo di Cavour in their visions for a unified Italy.
2. Mazzini viewed nationalism as a tool for social justice and liberation, whereas Cavour considered it a means for political and economic stability.
3. Discuss Mazzini's belief in civic nationalism and the importance of youth in the Italian unification process.
4. Evaluate the significance of the 1848 Revolutions in Italy. How did Mazzini's involvement in these events reflect his political philosophy and his ultimate vision for the Italian state?

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# UNIT

## Unification of Germany

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ understand the evolution of German nationalism
- ♦ understand the political and economic background of German nationalism
- ♦ analyse the role of Bismarck in the unification of Germany
- ♦ analyse the influence of the unification on European politics

### Prerequisites

The unification of Germany refers to the political and administrative integration of Germany into a strong nation state which officially occurred on 18 January 1871. Otto von Bismarck was the architect of a unified Germany. He was the first chancellor of united Germany and caused Germany to transform from a loose net of 39 states into the strongest industrial nation of Europe.

The unification of Germany had a great impact on the balance of power politics in Europe for the rest of history. For nearly 30 years (till 1890) Bismarck dominated Germany and European politics. Prussia was a German kingdom from 1701 to 1918. It covered almost two-thirds of the German Empire's territory and constituted three-fifths of its population from 1871 to 1918. The unification of many German states into the German Empire (1871-1918) followed Prussia's victories over Denmark in 1864, Austria in 1866, and France in 1870-71.

## Keywords

Congress of Vienna, Metternich, Bismarck, Frankfurt, Carlsbad Decrees, Zollverein

## Discussion

### 5.4.1 Discussions

Emerging from the ashes of war was the Congress of Vienna, A system to keep the balance of power in Europe in check. What this entailed was a system whereas no one nation could ever become too powerful to dominate the entire continent again, after the Napoleonic wars. This system would also try to limit the influence the liberal ideas of the French Revolution. Out of the Congress of Vienna a German confederation was formed to replace the old Holy Roman Empire and keep a balance of power and influence between Austria and Prussia in the German speaking areas of Europe. This system's architect was Klemens von Metternich.



Fig 5.4.1 Klemens von Metternich

Klemens von Metternich was a German prince from the Rhineland and Chancellor of the Austrian Empire. Metternich himself was a staunch conservative and was opposed to the ideals of liberalism and was a firm

believer in the old order of Monarchy. He was the one to set up and keep the balance of power in Europe. Known as the Metternich system, this system was successful in keeping the peace and balance of Power in Europe for many years until tension which boiled over in the Revolutions of 1848.

### 5.4.2 Background

Before 1871, Germany was fragmented into a large number of small states and did not pose a challenge to Europe. It, rather, served as a buffer between France on one side and Russia and Austria on the other. Germany comprised 39 loose German speaking independent states. There existed the German Confederation which was formed by the Congress of Vienna. It was really a collection of small states ruled by minor dukes, princes and kings. By the mid-19th century, revolutions in nearly every German State had already occurred. Rebels forced rulers to accept Constitutions and allow elections to the German National Assembly in Frankfurt.

In May 1848, delegates from all of the German states met at the Frankfurt Assembly with the purpose of preparing for the formation of a united and constitutional German nation-state. The Frankfurt constitution recognised Germany as a federal union which was to be headed by a monarch with a title. After the failure of the Frankfurt Assembly, there occurred a disagreement between moderate and radical liberals. The German Confederation was renewed in 1851.

The German Confederation was structured very similarly to its predecessor, the Confederation of the Rhine. The Confederation did not revert back to the old Holy Roman Empire with its 300-odd states but instead consisted of 38 states and four free cities, Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony and Württemberg held the most influence. The confederation met in a assembly which convened every few years in Frankfurt to discuss issues and debate law. The highest office in the confederation was The President and this position could only be held by an Austrian.

The people of Germany were greatly dissatisfied with the provisions of Vienna settlement. They had tasted fruits of nationality and democracy in the times of Napoleon. They were completely against the autocratic and despotic rule introduced by Metternich. They wanted a constitution and a parliament for each state. They desired liberty, unity and abolition of absolutism.

The main centers for the national movement were German universities. Professors, teachers, and the students who were being discontent with the existing system and established secret societies called Burschenschaft. The branches of this committee were established in 16 universities of Germany.

The developments in the German states alarmed Metternich. So, he called a conference of diplomats of Europe in 1818 at Aix-La-Chapelle. He expressed the necessity of suppressing the revolutionary ideas which are becoming popular throughout Europe.

#### 5.4.2.1 Carlsbad Decrees

In 1819 Metternich convened a meeting of the members of German confederation at Carlsbad. Most of the states attended the meeting. A conference of ministers from the major German states, meeting at the

Bohemian spa of Carlsbad (now Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic) on Aug. 6–31, 1819. The states represented were Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Hanover, Württemberg, Nassau, Baden, Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, and electoral Hesse. These laws were called Carlsbad decree. The Carlsbad Decrees consisted of several provisions aimed at curbing liberalism and nationalism within the German Confederation:

- ◆ The German states would not frame their separate constitution
- ◆ The representative of states would be appointed in universities whose duty was to watch over the activities of teachers and students
- ◆ The teachers were asked not to propagate harmful doctrines
- ◆ The teachers who failed to follow the law or those who criticism the policy of Metternich was to be removed from the institutions and universities and such teachers could not be appointed in any other institution or German universities
- ◆ The organisation of burschenschaft was banned
- ◆ Any student expelled from universities was not to be admitted in any other universities
- ◆ Restrictions were imposed on press.

In spite of the reactionary system of Metternich, the idea of nationalism were gradually developing in German state. The people of Germany began to consider Prussia as their leader. But Prussia was divided into two parts Eastern and western. Economic system was entirely different from each state. Pomerania, Brandenburg, Silesia, and East Prussia controlled agriculture, commanded

the army, directed the bureaucracy, and influenced the court. It constituted a powerful force for conservatism and particularism.

#### 5.4.2.2 The Octroi System of Prussia

The Octroi System in Prussia was a localised form of indirect taxation imposed on goods entering a city, town, or specific administrative region. This system varied significantly across Prussian districts and municipalities, reflecting the decentralised nature of taxation policies in the German states before unification. Historical records indicate that as many as 67 different types of octroi taxes were levied in Prussia, each differing in rates, applicability, and enforcement mechanisms. To regulate and enforce tax collection, numerous check posts were strategically established at the borders of each German state. Traders and merchants were required to pay substantial levies on imported goods, often leading to financial burdens and trade inefficiencies. This fragmented taxation structure not only complicated commerce within Prussia but also posed a significant obstacle to the economic integration of the German states before the formation of the German Empire in 1871. According to this law.

- ◆ No import duty would be imposed upon the goods coming to Prussia.
- ◆ The maximum duty imposed upon the manufactured goods would be 10 percent of actual cost.
- ◆ No toll tax would be imposed upon internal trade of Prussia.

As a result of this law Prussia became a single commercial unit. Prussia invited other states and by 1833 a union of 12 states are formed. the union is called Zollverein. The organisation abolished check posts,

internal tariffs, and provided free trade. The import and export duties were removed. The organisation became so popular that other states of Germany accepted the membership of Zollverein. In 1834 all states of German confederation joined Zollverein. Austria was completely excluded from the organisation. It laid the foundation for German unification.

#### 5.4.2.3 The Revolutions of 1848

The revolutions of 1848 played an important role in the unification. It led to the fall of Metternich and freed the German states from autocratic and reactionary rule under Metternich system. Several factors contributed to the widespread discontent that eventually led to the revolutions of 1848:

1. **Economic Hardships:** The industrial revolution was transforming Europe, and though some regions, like Prussia, experienced growth, many German states faced economic stagnation. Bad harvests in the late 1840s led to widespread famine and suffering, particularly among the lower classes.
2. **Political Repression:** The liberal and nationalist movements were also crushed by conservative monarchies. Governments like those in Austria and Prussia remained authoritarian and resistant to reforms. The Carlsbad Decrees of 1819, for example, had imposed harsh censorship, restricted the press and limited political freedoms.
3. **Nationalism:** The desire for German unity was a central theme of the 1848 revolutions. Nationalist thinkers and intellectuals, like the philosopher Johann

Gottfried Herder and the historian Friedrich Schiller, had long championed the idea of a unified Germany, and the uprisings in 1848 were seen as an opportunity to achieve this goal.

**4. Liberalism and Constitutionalism:** Liberals demanded political reforms, including constitutional monarchies, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and civil liberties. They wanted to move away from the absolutist monarchies toward representative governments.

While the 1848 revolutions in the German states did not result in immediate unification, they were a crucial catalyst in the process of German nationalism and political change. The events of 1848 revealed the widespread desire for a unified German nation-state and a more liberal political order. Although Prussia failed to unite Germany through the 1848 uprisings, the movement set the stage for future attempts, most notably under Otto von Bismarck.

#### **5.4.2.4 Otto von Bismarck**

Prussia's aggressive foreign and domestic policies were formulated by Bismarck and by 1900 Germany also became the largest economy of Europe. In essence, the Congress of Vienna (1815) caused Prussia to desire expansion into Germany. There was a great difference between the desire of the expansion of Prussia and the desire for the unification of the German people. Unification was also a cultural phenomenon but the expansion of Prussia to include the whole Germany was a militaristic one.

In 1858, Fredrick William IV was declared insane and the throne was passed to his brother William, known as William I.

William I became king in 1861 and was less idealistic than his brother and more of a Prussian patriot. The Constitution of 1850 created the Prussian Parliament, which refused to approve the necessary taxes. The liberals, who dominated the body, sought to avoid placing more power with the monarchy and for two years, the monarch and Parliament were deadlocked.

In 1862, Otto von Bismarck was appointed Prime minister of Prussia. Bismarck was a ruthless politician and a believer in "Realpolitik" who pursued aggressive policies and unified all the 39 German states into one nation state known as "German Empire or Deutschers Reich". Bismarck's ultimate goal was to unite the German states into a strong German Empire or Deutschers Reich with Prussia as its core. On 30 September 1862, Bismarck made his famous blood and iron speech in which he stressed that if Germany had to unify it would be done only with the use of military force. After his speech, he dismissed the budget proposal and ordered the bureaucracy to collect more taxes. This money was used to expand and strengthen the Prussian armies on a very large scale. These armies were then used in the three wars which are popularly known as the "German wars of unification".

#### **5.4.3 The German Wars of Unification**

##### **5.4.3.1 Prussian-Danish War (1864-1865)**

Schleswig and Holstein were primarily populated by Germans and had been under the rule of the Danish King for centuries. In 1863, Denmark formed a new constitution aiming to incorporate Schleswig and Holstein into Denmark. By that time, nationalist sentiment had already erupted all over Germany and Bismarck saw a great opportunity for intervention in Schleswig and Holstein.

Liberals in Germany had always been in favour of separating Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark. Prussia together with Austria sent an ultimatum to Denmark on 16 January 1864 demanding a withdrawal of the constitution which had included Schleswig into Denmark within 48 hours or face military action but Denmark refused. Denmark was defeated by Prussian and Austrian forces. In the backdrop of their victory, the treaty of Gastein was signed to take control of the annexed territories. The treaty stated Prussia controlled Schleswig and Austria controlled Holstein.

### **Convention of Gastein**

Agreement between Austria and Prussia reached on Aug. 20, 1865, after their seizure of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein from Denmark in 1864; it temporarily postponed the final struggle between them for hegemony over Germany. The pact provided that both the emperor of Austria and the king of Prussia were to be sovereigns over the duchies, Prussia administering Schleswig and Austria administering Holstein (which was sandwiched between Schleswig to the north and Prussian territory to the south). Both duchies were to be admitted to the Zollverein (German Customs Union), headed by Prussia, though Austria was not a member.

### **5.4.3.2 Austro-Prussian War (1866)**

In 1866 the conflict between Prussia and Austria erupted over the control of Schleswig and Holstein, the German speaking territories that was occupied by the two powers after the war in 1864 against Denmark. Bismarck who enforced the conflict already knew that Russia, France and Italy would stand aside. The conflict led to the war between Austria and Prussia in 1866. In the war, South German states and some Central German states stood with Austria, while Italy, most

North German states and some smaller German states stood with Prussia. At the beginning of the war, Austria had 320,000 men at its disposal while Prussia had 350,000 men. The Prussian general staff was also better organised than the Austrians. Prussia crushed Austria in the war and retained the control of Schleswig and Holstein. After Prussia's victory, Bismarck set up peaceful treaties with Austria to remain as future allies. Prussia was joined by Northern German states to form the North German Confederation. It was formed in 1867 and gave rise to a new powerful German state. Although the German states were allowed to govern themselves, they were still under the influence of the German Emperor.

#### **5.4.3.3 Battle of Sadowa**

This decisive battle during the Seven Weeks' War between Prussia and Austria, fought at the village of Sadowa, northwest of the Bohemian town of Königgrätz (now Hradec Králové, Czech Republic) on the upper Elbe River. The Prussian victory effected Austria's exclusion from a Prussian-dominated Germany. The war between Austria and Prussia continued for 7 weeks only. Thus, it was called seven weeks war. It was one of the shortest wars in the history. The last and decisive battle was at Sadowa in July 1866 in which Prussia completely defeated Austria.

#### **The Treaty of Prague**

Concluded the Seven Weeks' War with Austria and other German states on August 23, 1866, and cleared the way for a settlement both in Prussia and in the wider affairs of Germany. The treaty of Prague was concluded on August 23 1866. According to this treaty the old confederation of German states created in the Congress of Vienna was dissolved. A new federation was to be constituted by Prussia in which Austria was

not to be included. All the twenty-two states situated in north Germany were made free from the domination of Austria and these states were to be included in the proposed North German confederation. The state of Venetia was given to Italy.

#### 5.4.3.4 Franco-Prussian war

Bismarck wanted to unite all German speaking states into one nation state. By 1870, all the German states which fought against Prussia in 1866 Austro-Prussia war were coerced and coaxed into mutually protective alliance, with Prussia. This new power, North German Confederation, destabilised the European balance of power established by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 after the Napoleonic Wars. France demanded compensation in the form of territorial gains both in Belgium and also on the left bank of the Rhine with the purpose of securing France's strategic position. But Bismarck flatly refused these demands. Prussia then turned towards the south of Germany with coveted interests where it sought to incorporate the southern German kingdoms, viz. Bavaria, Wurttemberg, Baden and Hesse-Darmstadt, into a unified Germany.

France was strongly opposed to the moves of Prussia to annex the southern German states. This led to a war between France and Prussia in 1870 in which France suffered defeat at the hands of the strong Prussian army assisted by almost all German states. The French territories, viz. Alsace-Lorraine, were annexed by Prussia by the end of the war. The French army was finally defeated at Sedan on September 2, 1870 leading to the surrender of Napoleon III. On 18 January 1871, the formal unification of Germany into a politically and administratively integrated nation state was declared officially at the Versailles Palace's Hall of Mirrors in France.

On 10 May 1871, during the Treaty

of Frankfurt signed between France and Germany at the end of the Franco-Prussian war, Prussia retained the control of all the territories annexed from France. After the unification, Prussia emerged as a strong German Empire both militarily and economically.

#### 5.4.3.5 Treaty of Frankfurt

A treaty was signed on May 10, 1871 between France and Prussia at Frankfurt. The provisions of the treaty were severe on the part of France. She had to give Alsace and Lorraine which were considered of great importance from industrial point of view. France had to promise to pay five thousand million francs as war indemnity. During this period an army of Germany would stay in France and French Government has to bear the expenses of the army. In this way the treaty was humiliating for France. The consequences of Franco-Prussian war proved very significant in the history of Germany, France and Italy. The treaty of Frankfurt sowed the seeds of hostility and enmity between France and Germany. This hostility led to the First World War.

#### 5.4.4 Factors that Contributed to the Unification of Germany

##### 5.4.4.1 Carlsbad Decrees (1819)

The Carlsbad Decrees were not directly a cause of unification, but they indirectly contributed to it by stimulating resistance to conservative repression. The decrees sought to suppress liberal, nationalist, and revolutionary movements in the German Confederation, particularly in universities and student groups. However, these measures fuelled dissatisfaction and a desire for reform, laying the groundwork for future nationalist and liberal movements that would push for the unification of Germany. According to the Carlsbad decrees, a special representative

of the ruler of the State was to be appointed for each university. He was to reside in the place where the university was situated and he was to exercise a large number of powers under the instructions of the ruler. The agent was to see to the strictest enforcement of the existing laws and disciplinary regulations.

He was to observe carefully the spirit which was shown by the teachers in the universities in their lectures and report to the government if there were any signs of disloyalty or rebellion. It was the duty of the ruler to remove from the universities or other educational institutions all those teachers who were considered to be abusing their legitimate influence over the students or who spread among the students harmful doctrines hostile to public order or subversive of the existing governmental institutions. Such a teacher was not to be employed in any other university or educational institution.

The laws against secret and unauthorised societies in the universities were to be strictly enforced. Those laws applied especially to the University Students' Union (Allgemeine Burschenschaft). Those persons who were considered to be members of the secret or unauthorised societies were not to be admitted to any public office.

The students who were expelled from one university were not to be admitted into another. No publication which appeared in the form of daily issue or as a serial not exceeding 20 sheets of printed matter was to go to the press without the previous knowledge and approval of the State officials.

The Federal Diet was to have the right to suppress by its own authority such writings as were inimical to the honour of the union, the safety of the individual State or the maintenance of peace and quiet in Germany. There was to be no appeal for such decisions and the governments involved were bound to see that they were enforced. When a

newspaper or periodical was suppressed by a decision of the Diet, the editor was not to be allowed to edit another similar publication for five years. Provision was made for a central commission of investigation consisting of seven members.

Its function was to have a thorough investigation of the facts relating to the origin and manifold ramification of the revolutionary plots and demagogical associations directed against the existing constitution and the internal peace of the union and the individual States. It was also to investigate into the existence of the plots. The Central Investigation Commission was to furnish the Diet from time to time with a report of the results of its investigations.

By the Carlsbad Decrees, the Emperor of Austria became "the head of an all-powerful German police system." Metternich might have gone still further, but his enthusiasm was cooled by the opposition from certain German States. The ruler of Wurtemburg took up the challenge and gave further reforms to his people and put himself at the head of "a purely Germanic league" to resist Austria and Prussia. The result was that the Final Act of Vienna represented a compromise. The independence of the small States was guaranteed. In 1824, the Carlsbad Decrees were made permanent.

#### 5.4.4.2 Zollverein

The Zollverein was a crucial factor in Germany's economic unification, although it did not directly unite the various German states politically. It was a customs union created in 1834 that united many of the German states economically by abolishing tariffs between member states and standardising trade policies. When such was the state of affairs in Germany, certain forces helped indirectly the unification of the country. A reference may be made in this connection

to the Zollverein or the Customs' Union. Before 1818, each district in Prussia had its own customs and there were as many as 67 tariff areas in Prussia alone.

These Prussian areas stood in the way of trade and unity and consequently Prussia could not compete with Great Britain. On account of the long line of customs houses, there was a lot of smuggling. In 1818, the Tariff Reforms Law was passed. By that Act, all raw materials were to be imported free. A duty of 10 per cent was to be levied on manufactured goods and 20 per cent on "colonial" goods. All internal custom duties were abolished. Heavy transit duties on tariff goods passing through Prussia were imposed with a view to compel other States to join Prussia. The result of the reform of 1818 was that Prussia became a free trade area. Internal trade increased and the revenue of the State also showed a rise.

The law of 1818 applied to Prussia alone, but in course of time many other German States joined Prussia. In 1819, Schwarzburg-Sondershausen joined the Union. In 1822, Weimar Gotha, Merchlenburg-Schwerin, Schaumburg-Lippe, Rudolstadt and Hamburg also joined.

However there was opposition to the Customs' Union from some German States. In 1828, a Customs' Union was set up in the South under the leadership of Bavaria and Wurtemburg. In the same year, another Customs' Union of the middle States was formed. It consisted of Saxony, Hesse-Cassel, Hanover, Brunswick and the free cities of Hamburg, Bremen and Frankfurt.

However in 1831, Hesse-Cassel joined the Zollverein and the union of the middle States was broken up. In 1834, Bavaria joined the Zollverein for 8 years. The terms of the Union were that the meetings were to be held at Berlin and other places. Bavarian goods were to be given special treatment.

In the same year, Saxony also joined.

By 1837, most of the States had joined the Zollverein. Whenever the treaties expired, they were renewed. Only Hanover, Oldenburg, Mecklenburg and the Hanse towns remained outside the Zollverein. The main terms of entry into the Zollverein were complete free trade between State and State, uniform tariff on all frontiers and net proceeds to be divided in proportion to population of the States concerned.

To begin with, Austria was completely indifferent to the Zollverein. Metternich did not attach any importance to commerce and consequently ignored the activities of the Zollverein. However, after the overthrow of Metternich in 1848, Austria made a determined effort to join the Zollverein. Prussia resisted the same and was successful. In 1853, a treaty was entered into between the Zollverein and Austria by which certain concessions were given mutually.

#### **5.4.4.3 The Frankfurt Parliament**

The Frankfurt Parliament was the first freely elected assembly that sought to create a unified German state. It was convened in 1848 in the wake of revolutionary uprisings across Europe and was a direct attempt to address the liberal and nationalist demands for a unified Germany. The Parliament drafted a constitution that proposed a unified German Empire under a constitutional monarchy, with the King of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, as its emperor. The Frankfurt Parliament consisted of about 300 members at the beginning but later on, its membership rose to about 550. Heinrich Von Gagern was elected its president. It was dominated by professors and journalists and no wonder a lot of time was wasted on the discussion of abstract principles. The only work done by the Frankfurt Parliament within the first

six months was the appointment of a central executive.

Archduke John was selected the Imperial Vicar of the provisional government. By the Christmas of 1848, the fundamental rights of the people of Germany were agreed upon. Some of those rights were civil and religious equality, freedom of the press, trial by jury, abolition of special privileges, etc. There were two schools of thought with regard to the inclusion or exclusion of Austria from Germany. The “little Germans” insisted on excluding Austria but the “great German” were in favour of the inclusion of Austria. Ultimately, the former won and Austria was excluded. Provision was made for a hereditary king and a German Confederation. The throne of Germany was offered by the Frankfurt Parliament to Frederick William IV of Prussia on 28 March 1849 but the same was rejected on 3 April 1849. Many factors were responsible for his decision.

He was temperamentally conservative and was not in sympathy with the aspirations of the Frankfurt Parliament. He was not prepared to be “a serf of the revolution”. He believed in the Divine Right of Kings and was not prepared to accept the constitution

offered by the Frankfurt Parliament. He might have accepted the throne if the same had been offered to him by the princes, but he refused to accept the same from the people.

He was not prepared to accept “the crown of shame” out of the “gutter”. Probably, the real reason was that the King of Prussia was not prepared to fight against Austria. By this time, Austria had recovered herself and if the King of Prussia had accepted the throne offered to him by the Frankfurt Parliament, he would certainly have come into conflict with Austria. That would have meant war and the King of Prussia felt that he was not equal to the task.

It was under these circumstances that the throne was refused and with that the work of the Frankfurt Parliament ended. The people of Germany had tried to frame a constitution, but their efforts failed. They wasted the valuable time in the beginning in academic discussions. If they had acted with speed at the beginning, there were greater chances of their success. The failure of the Frankfurt Parliament convinced the Germans that some other method had to be followed to bring about unification of the country.

## Recap

- ◆ Germany before 1871 was fragmented into 39 independent states under a loose Confederation
- ◆ The Frankfurt Assembly of 1848 sought a united Germany but ultimately failed
- ◆ German universities became hubs for nationalist movements, alarming Metternich in 1818
- ◆ The Carlsbad Decrees suppressed liberal movements but fueled resistance and future reforms

- ◆ Universities under Carlsbad Decrees faced strict surveillance, with dissenting teachers removed permanently
- ◆ The Zollverein abolished internal tariffs, boosting trade and economic unification in Germany
- ◆ Opposition to Zollverein emerged, but Prussia's reforms led most states to join by 1837
- ◆ The Frankfurt Parliament sought German unification but failed due to conservative opposition
- ◆ King Friedrich Wilhelm IV rejected the Frankfurt Parliament's throne, fearing conflict with Austria
- ◆ The Frankfurt Parliament's failure highlighted the need for alternate paths to German unification

## Objective Questions

1. Who formulated Prussia's aggressive foreign and domestic policies?
2. Which event caused Prussia to desire expansion into Germany?
3. In which year was Frederick William IV declared insane?
4. Who became the king of Prussia in 1861?
5. What was the name of the speech given by Bismarck on 30 September 1862?
6. Which two countries fought against Denmark in the Prussian-Danish War?
7. What was the primary cause of the Austro-Prussian War of 1866?
8. Which battle was the decisive one in the Austro-Prussian War?
9. When was the Treaty of Prague concluded?
10. What was the immediate consequence of the Battle of Sedan in 1870?

## Answers

1. Otto von Bismarck
2. Congress of Vienna (1815)
3. 1858
4. William I
5. Blood and Iron Speech
6. Prussia and Austria
7. Control over Schleswig and Holstein
8. Battle of Sadowa
9. August 23, 1866
10. The surrender of Napoleon III and the fall of the Bonaparte dynasty

## Assignments

1. Analyse the role of the Schleswig-Holstein Question in the Unification of Germany (1871).
2. Evaluate Bismarck's diplomatic Maneuvering in the Schleswig-Holstein Crisis and its impact on Austria-Prussia relations.
3. Discuss the factors contributing to the revolutions of 1848, including economic hardships, political repression, nationalism, and liberal demands.
4. Examine the significance of Otto von Bismarck's leadership in the unification of Germany.
5. Assess the importance of the Prussian-Danish War (1864–1865) and the Austro-Prussian War (1866) in consolidating Prussia's dominance and creating the framework for German unification.

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# Bismarck and Germany

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the role of Bismarck in the Unification of Germany
- ◆ analyse the emergence of Bismarck as a statesman and diplomat
- ◆ understand the concept of state under Bismarck

### Prerequisites

Otto von Bismarck, often referred to as the “Iron Chancellor,” was a key architect of German unification. In 1862, King William I of Prussia appointed Bismarck as the Minister President, marking the beginning of a transformative era in European history. Bismarck’s leadership was instrumental in reshaping the German political landscape. Following Prussia’s victory in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, he established the North German Confederation, effectively excluding Austria from German affairs and dissolving the older German Confederation.

The Franco-Prussian War further solidified Bismarck’s vision of unification. After France’s defeat, the German princes proclaimed the creation of the German Empire in 1871 at Versailles, uniting all German states except Austria under Prussian dominance. This victory was pivotal in resolving the nationalist question, as it rallied the southern German states - Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria, and Hesse-Darmstadt - into an alliance with the North German Confederation.

Historians debate whether Bismarck strategically provoked France into war to unify Germany or simply capitalised on unfolding events. Regardless of the intent, his adept diplomacy, skillful manipulation of alliances, and ability to maintain a balance of power ensured Germany’s dominance in Europe while maintaining peace during the 1870s and 1880s. Bismarck’s statesmanship left an enduring legacy on European geopolitics and the structure of modern Germany.

# Keywords

Bismarck, Germany, Diplomacy, Legacy, Napoleonic Wars, Treaty of Frankfurt

## Discussion

### 5.5.1 Early Life and Education



Fig 5.5.1 Bismarck

Bismarck was born into a noble family with strong ties to the Prussian aristocracy. His father, Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand von Bismarck, was a Junker landowner, and his mother, Wilhelmine Mencken, came from a wealthy family. The Junkers were a class of land-owning Prussian nobles who wielded significant influence in the military and political spheres of Prussia. Bismarck's early life was shaped by his aristocratic upbringing, which provided him with an education that combined classical studies with a strong emphasis on military service and public administration.

Bismarck attended the Friedrich Wilhelm Gymnasium in Berlin, where he was exposed to the classical education typical of German aristocracy, learning Latin, Greek, history, and literature. His intellectual development was

also marked by his studies at the University of Göttingen and later the University of Berlin, where he focused on law and history. These years of study fostered Bismarck's interest in the intricacies of political power, statecraft, and the importance of diplomacy.

After completing his studies, Bismarck entered the Prussian civil service in 1839, beginning his career as a young bureaucrat. His early years in the civil service exposed him to the complexities of the Prussian state and its administrative apparatus. This experience played a critical role in shaping Bismarck's later career, particularly his understanding of bureaucracy and his ability to manipulate the levers of state power.

The 19th century was a period of profound political and social upheaval in Europe. Following the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815), Europe's political landscape was reshaped at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, which sought to restore order and stability to the continent after the chaos of the Napoleonic era. The Congress of Vienna aimed to prevent the rise of another Napoleon and redraw the map of Europe, establishing a new balance of power. The decisions made during this Congress would have a lasting impact on the future of European politics.

At the core of the Congress of Vienna was the principle of legitimacy, which sought to restore the old monarchies that had been displaced by Napoleon. The major powers, including Austria, Britain, Russia, and Prussia, formed a coalition that sought to

maintain the status quo and prevent the spread of revolutionary ideas, particularly those associated with nationalism and liberalism.

However, the Congress of Vienna's settlement left many unresolved tensions. The map of Germany, for example, consisted of more than 30 independent states, each with its own rulers and interests. The German Confederation, established by the Congress, was a loose association of these states, but it lacked the cohesion necessary to maintain order or to address the growing demands for a united German state.

Meanwhile, the early 19th century saw the rise of nationalism and liberalism across Europe. Nationalism, the belief in the right of a people to form a unified state based on common language, culture, and history, became a powerful force. In Germany, the idea of a unified nation-state took root, driven by intellectuals like Johann Gottfried Herder and Friedrich Schiller, who argued that the German-speaking peoples of Europe shared common cultural ties that transcended the borders of individual states.

Liberalism, on the other hand, emphasised the importance of constitutional government, civil liberties, and political reforms. Liberals in Germany demanded more representative government and the adoption of constitutional monarchies. However, these ideas were met with resistance from the conservative monarchies that dominated Europe, particularly in Prussia and Austria.

In the context of these broader European developments, Bismarck emerged as a key figure. He was not initially an advocate of nationalism or liberalism but saw these movements as forces that could be harnessed to strengthen Prussia's position in Europe. Bismarck's ability to navigate these complex political dynamics would be one of his greatest strengths as he worked toward the

goal of German unification.

### 5.5.2 The Fragmentation of Germany and the Role of Bismarck

Before Bismarck's rise to power, Germany was a fragmented collection of small, independent states. The German Confederation, created by the Congress of Vienna, included 39 states, but it was weak and lacked the political cohesion necessary for effective governance. The Kingdom of Prussia and the Austrian Empire were the two most powerful states within the Confederation, but neither was able to achieve the goal of unification due to their conflicting interests.

Prussia, led by the Hohenzollern monarchy, was a rising power in Europe. It had a strong military and a rapidly growing economy, thanks in part to its industrialisation. However, it faced resistance from Austria, which sought to maintain its dominance over the German states. Austria, led by the Habsburg monarchy, had its own imperial ambitions and was deeply invested in preserving the existing order in Central Europe.

Bismarck's early political career was shaped by his desire to strengthen Prussia's position and achieve its goals of national unification. He understood that the only way to unite the German states under Prussia's leadership was through a combination of military force, diplomacy, and the exploitation of existing political tensions. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Bismarck did not believe that liberal ideals or the peaceful spread of nationalism would lead to German unification. Instead, he embraced the use of *realpolitik*, a pragmatic approach to politics that focused on the pursuit of national interests, regardless of moral or ideological considerations.

### 5.5.3 The Congress of Vienna and Its Influence on Bismarck's Policies

The Congress of Vienna, held in 1815, was a key moment in the history of 19th-century Europe. It marked the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the beginning of a new era of European diplomacy. The primary goal of the Congress was to restore the pre-Napoleonic order and prevent further revolutionary upheavals. The decisions made during the Congress had far-reaching consequences, particularly for the German-speaking states.

The Congress of Vienna sought to prevent the rise of another Napoleonic power by establishing a balance of power between the major European states. This balance was meant to ensure that no single state could dominate Europe as France had done under Napoleon. In the case of Germany, the Congress created the German Confederation, which was meant to serve as a buffer against external threats and maintain internal order. However, the Confederation's lack of central authority made it ineffective at addressing the growing demands for German unity.

Bismarck's foreign policy was influenced by the aftermath of the Congress of Vienna. He understood that the fragmented German states could not remain divided if they were to compete with the great powers of Europe, such as France, Austria, and Russia. The failure of the Congress to create a strong, unified German state was something that Bismarck sought to correct during his time in power.

Bismarck was also keenly aware of the diplomatic consequences of the Congress of Vienna for Prussia. The decisions made at the Congress had ensured that Prussia, while powerful, was still constrained by Austria's influence over the German states. Bismarck's ultimate goal was to shift the

balance of power in Prussia's favour and ensure that Germany would be unified under Prussian leadership, excluding Austria from the new German Empire

### 5.5.4 As Minister President of Prussia (1862)

In 1862, Otto von Bismarck was appointed as the Minister President of Prussia by King William I, marking the beginning of one of the most remarkable political careers in European history. His appointment came at a time when Prussia was undergoing internal and external challenges. The conservative monarchy, led by King William I, faced opposition from a liberal parliament that was pushing for democratic reforms. There was a growing demand for a constitutional monarchy, and the liberal factions within the Prussian Diet sought to curtail the power of the monarchy and increase the influence of the parliament.

Bismarck's appointment was not initially well-received by the liberal factions. He was known for his conservative, monarchist views, which seemed incompatible with the demands of a parliamentary system. However, King William I recognised Bismarck's political acumen and believed that he could resolve the tensions between the monarchy and the liberal parliamentary forces. Bismarck was tasked with navigating the complex political landscape and ensuring the stability of the monarchy in a period marked by growing nationalism and liberalism.

At the time of his appointment, Prussia was deeply divided over the issues of political reform and the structure of governance. The Prussian Parliament (Landtag) had grown increasingly assertive, and the liberal faction, which controlled the majority of the parliament, demanded reforms that would diminish the power of the king and establish a more democratic government. In

contrast, the conservative factions, which included King William I and his advisors, were opposed to these reforms and sought to preserve the monarchy's dominance.

Bismarck's strategy was to employ Realpolitik, a pragmatic political approach that focused on the practicalities of governance rather than ideological consistency. He understood that Prussia needed a strong, centralised state to assert itself in Europe, and this could only be achieved through a strong monarchy and effective leadership. His appointment as Minister President was a turning point in Prussian politics, as it marked the beginning of Bismarck's efforts to reshape the political order of Germany.

### **5.5.5 Principles of Bismarck's Leadership**

#### **Realpolitik: A Pragmatic Approach to Politics**

One of the central tenets of Bismarck's political philosophy was 'Realpolitik', a term often associated with his name. Realpolitik refers to a pragmatic and practical approach to politics, where decisions are made based on the realities of power rather than ideological principles. For Bismarck, the pursuit of national interests and the maintenance of political power were far more important than abstract ideas about democracy, liberalism, or nationalism.

Bismarck's approach to Realpolitik was driven by the belief that political stability and national strength could only be achieved through careful management of internal and external relations. He was willing to make pragmatic compromises when necessary but was also unyielding in his determination to achieve his goals. This approach was evident in his domestic policies, as well as in his foreign diplomacy.

In the domestic sphere, Bismarck

used Realpolitik to outmaneuver political opponents and maintain the dominance of the monarchy. He employed a combination of diplomacy, coercion, and calculated political maneuvering to weaken the power of the liberal opposition in the parliament. Bismarck understood that his primary goal was to strengthen Prussia and, later, Germany, by consolidating power within the monarchy and ensuring the success of his policies, even if it meant going against democratic principles.

In the international arena, Bismarck's Realpolitik led to a series of strategic alliances and diplomatic victories that were crucial in the unification of Germany. His ability to manipulate alliances, create favourable diplomatic circumstances, and manage conflicts with other European powers was a hallmark of his leadership. His Realpolitik approach was instrumental in achieving the unification of Germany through war and diplomacy, rather than through democratic means.

#### **“Blood and Iron”: The Role of Military Power**

Bismarck's philosophy of “blood and iron” encapsulated his belief in the importance of military power and the willingness to use force to achieve political ends. This phrase became synonymous with Bismarck's approach to German unification and his belief that the political unity of Germany could only be achieved through military means, if necessary.

The phrase “blood and iron” was first articulated in Bismarck's famous “Blood and Iron Speech” in 1862, in which he argued that Prussia needed to rely on military strength and economic development rather than liberal reforms to achieve its goals. The speech was delivered at a time when Prussia's political system was in crisis, with the king at odds with the parliament over

military spending. Bismarck used the speech to assert that Germany's unification could not be achieved through peaceful negotiations or democratic reforms but through the effective use of force.

Bismarck's emphasis on military power and his willingness to use war as a tool of diplomacy were evident in his approach to the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. These wars were pivotal in the creation of the German Empire and the unification of the German states under Prussian leadership. Bismarck's skillful manipulation of military and diplomatic tactics ensured that Prussia emerged victorious in both conflicts, leading to the eventual unification of Germany.

### **Managing Conflicts Between the Monarchy and the Prussian Parliament**

Upon assuming the role of Minister President, Bismarck was confronted with significant challenges in managing the tensions between the monarchy and the liberal Prussian Parliament. The political climate in Prussia was marked by a fundamental disagreement over the balance of power between the monarchy and the legislature.

At the heart of the conflict was the issue of military reform and the king's authority. The Prussian monarch, King William I, was determined to modernise the Prussian military, but this required significant financial investment. The Prussian Parliament, dominated by liberal factions, was unwilling to approve the necessary funds without securing greater influence over the military and other aspects of governance. The liberals, who were in favour of limiting the power of the monarchy, sought to impose constitutional reforms that would reduce the king's authority and increase the power of the parliament.

Bismarck recognised that the liberal

opposition in the parliament posed a significant obstacle to his goals. He understood that in order to strengthen Prussia and pursue his vision of a unified Germany, he needed to bypass the parliament and consolidate power within the monarchy. His first major political challenge was to secure funding for the military without the approval of the parliament. To achieve this, Bismarck engaged in a series of political maneuvers that would later become central to his leadership style.

One of Bismarck's most notable early actions was his use of executive power to bypass the Prussian parliament and fund the military reforms. He pursued a strategy of "governing without the parliament" by relying on royal decrees and administrative decisions. This approach was controversial, as it undermined the authority of the parliament and alienated many liberal reformers. However, Bismarck was resolute in his belief that the success of his policies depended on a strong monarchy and an effective military, which could not be achieved if the parliament was allowed to block crucial reforms.

Bismarck's efforts to manage the political crisis reached a turning point in 1866, when tensions between the monarchy and the parliament became unbearable. The breakdown of negotiations over military reform led to the Austro-Prussian War, in which Bismarck skilfully exploited the situation to create the North German Confederation and establish Prussia as the dominant power in Germany. By defeating Austria and excluding it from the German Confederation, Bismarck was able to consolidate Prussian power and lay the groundwork for the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership.

### **5.5.6 The Role in German Unification**

Bismarck's efforts to unify Germany

cannot be understood without considering the series of wars he orchestrated or manipulated to further Prussia's goals. Each of these wars was a crucial step in the unification process.

### **1. The Danish War (1864)**

The first war in Bismarck's unification strategy was the Danish War of 1864. The conflict arose over the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, territories inhabited by Germans but controlled by Denmark. In 1863, Denmark attempted to incorporate these duchies into its kingdom by changing their constitution. This move was met with widespread nationalist opposition in Germany.

Bismarck seized the opportunity to intervene. He formed an alliance with Austria, and together, they defeated Denmark. Following the victory, the two powers agreed to divide the duchies between them: Prussia took control of Schleswig, while Austria controlled Holstein. While this seemed like a diplomatic success for Bismarck, it would later set the stage for a conflict between Prussia and Austria, which would help advance Bismarck's goal of unification under Prussian leadership.

### **2. The Austro-Prussian War (1866)**

The next phase of Bismarck's strategy was the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. After the Danish War, Bismarck sought to consolidate Prussia's leadership over the German states, and this required removing Austria from the German Confederation, which had historically been the dominant power in German affairs.

Bismarck skilfully manipulated tensions over the administration of Schleswig and Holstein, and in 1866, he provoked a war between Prussia and Austria. The war was short and decisive. Austria's army, though large and experienced, was caught off-guard by Prussia's superior military organisation and the use of railways to quickly mobilise

troops. In just seven weeks, Prussia defeated Austria and its allies, including many southern German states.

### **3. The Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871)**

The final and most significant step in Bismarck's unification strategy was the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. Bismarck had long viewed France as the principal obstacle to German unification. France had been a dominant European power and had historically sought to prevent the unification of Germany.

Bismarck carefully manipulated tensions between Prussia and France. In particular, he used the issue of the Spanish throne to provoke French hostility. In 1869, the Spanish throne was offered to a German prince, Leopold of Hohenzollern, which angered the French. Bismarck used this diplomatic crisis, known as the Ems Dispatch, to further inflame French anger by editing a diplomatic communication between the French ambassador and King Wilhelm I to make it appear as though the Prussian king had insulted France.

The result was that France declared war on Prussia in July 1870. However, Bismarck had calculated that this would rally the southern German states - Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria, and Hesse-Darmstadt - into an alliance with the North German Confederation, as they too feared French aggression. The war united the German states against a common enemy, and the Prussian army, supported by these southern states, decisively defeated France.

The Treaty of Frankfurt (1871) ended the war and resulted in the proclamation of the German Empire in Versailles on January 18, 1871. The victory in the Franco-Prussian War not only secured German unification but also elevated Prussia as the dominant power in the new German Empire, with King

Wilhelm I crowned as the German Emperor (Kaiser). This marked the culmination of Bismarck's unification efforts.

One of the major challenges Bismarck faced was the need to suppress political opposition, particularly from Catholics and Socialists. Bismarck's Kulturkampf (1871-1878), or cultural struggle, aimed to reduce the influence of the Catholic Church in Germany. He believed that the church posed a threat to the authority of the state, particularly as the Catholic population was concentrated in the southern states, which had been less enthusiastic about unification. Bismarck sought to weaken the church's influence through a series of laws that restricted its power.

Bismarck also faced growing socialist movements within Germany, which sought to challenge the industrialisation and social inequality that had emerged in the wake of unification. In response, Bismarck implemented a series of social welfare programmes, including health insurance, accident insurance, and pensions, to co-opt the working class and prevent the rise of socialist movements. While these programmes were a precursor to the modern welfare state, they also reflected Bismarck's desire to maintain social stability.

### 5.5.7 Bismarck's Legacy

Bismarck's role in German unification is one of the most significant achievements in European history. By the time of his resignation in 1890, he had transformed Germany from a loose collection of independent states into one of the most powerful and industrialised nations in the world. His pragmatic approach to diplomacy, his mastery of realpolitik, and his ability to manipulate political events to his advantage ensured that German unification was achieved under Prussian leadership.

However, Bismarck's legacy is not without controversy. His authoritarian methods, his suppression of political opposition, and his use of war to achieve political ends have been criticised. Moreover, his exclusion of Austria and the centralisation of power in Prussia created tensions within the German Empire that would eventually contribute to the outbreak of World War

Despite these criticisms, Bismarck's role in German unification remains a defining moment in European history. His creation of a unified German state reshaped the balance of power in Europe, and his diplomatic efforts during the 1870s and 1880s helped maintain peace in Europe for several decades.

## Recap

- ◆ Bismarck's aristocratic background shaped his political and military education
- ◆ Nationalism and liberalism influenced Bismarck's pragmatic approach to unification
- ◆ The German Confederation lacked unity, hindering Germany's political cohesion
- ◆ Bismarck's Realpolitik focused on national interests, not liberal ideals
- ◆ The Congress of Vienna shaped Bismarck's policies toward German unification
- ◆ Bismarck was appointed Minister President of Prussia in 1862
- ◆ He employed Realpolitik to maintain political power and stability
- ◆ Bismarck's "blood and iron" philosophy emphasised military power
- ◆ He skilfully navigated conflicts between monarchy and parliament
- ◆ Bismarck's leadership led to the unification of Germany
- ◆ Bismarck orchestrated wars to unify Germany, starting with the Danish War in 1864
- ◆ The Austro-Prussian War (1866) removed Austria from German affairs and strengthened Prussia's leadership
- ◆ The Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) united German states and led to the formation of the German Empire
- ◆ Bismarck's Kulturkampf aimed to reduce the Catholic Church's influence in the new German Empire
- ◆ Bismarck introduced social welfare programmes to stabilise Germany and curb socialist movements

## Objective Questions

1. Which event marked the end of the Napoleonic Wars and influenced Bismarck's policies?
2. Which principle was central to the Congress of Vienna?

3. Which two powerful states were involved in the rivalry within the German Confederation?
4. Which political approach did Bismarck use to manage the tension between the monarchy and the parliament?
5. What role did Bismarck's civil service experience play in his political career?
6. What is the meaning of Bismarck's famous phrase "blood and iron"?
7. What was the primary challenge Bismarck faced after becoming Minister President?
8. Who appointed Bismarck as Minister President of Prussia in 1862?
9. What was Bismarck's ultimate goal regarding the German states?

## Answers

1. Congress of Vienna
2. Legitimacy
3. Prussia and Austria
4. Realpolitik
5. It helped him understand the complexities of the Prussian state and bureaucracy
6. The need for military power to achieve political goals
7. Conflict with the liberal parliament
8. King William I
9. To unite Germany under Prussian leadership

## Assignments

1. Examine the role of Bismarck's diplomatic and military strategies in the process of German unification.
2. Discuss the challenges faced by Bismarck in consolidating power within the newly unified German Empire.
3. How did the Danish War, Austro-Prussian War, and Franco-Prussian War contribute to the formation of the German Empire?
4. How did the "Blood and Iron" philosophy shape the political landscape of 19th-century Europe, and what were the key outcomes of his strategy?
5. Discuss the political dynamics between the monarchy and the Prussian Parliament during Bismarck's tenure as Minister President.

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**BLOCK**

# World Wars and Peace Organisations



# UNIT

## First World War

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ analyse the causes and consequences of World War I
- ◆ understand the impact of alliances on the war
- ◆ understand the social and economic effects of the war
- ◆ assess the post-war treaties and their outcomes

### Prerequisites

World War I was a major turning point in 20th-century geopolitical history, reshaping the global order and setting the stage for future conflicts. The war led to the collapse of four major imperial dynasties - the Habsburgs of Austria-Hungary, the Hohenzollerns of Germany, the sultanate of the Ottoman Empire, and the Romanovs of Russia - each of which had dominated Europe and parts of the Middle East for centuries. The dismantling of these empires resulted in the creation of new nation-states, the redrawing of borders, and a complete transformation of the political structure in Europe and the Middle East. In the aftermath, countries like Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Turkey emerged, while other regions faced instability and the rise of nationalist movements.

The war not only altered the political fabric of Europe but also shifted the global balance of power. The United States, initially hesitant to become involved, emerged from the war as a leading world power. Its involvement in the war, particularly after 1917, proved crucial in tipping the balance in favour of the Allies and eventually shaping the post-war world order. The U.S.'s influence in global affairs grew dramatically during the interwar period, as it emerged as both an economic and military superpower. On the battlefield, the war marked a drastic technological

leap in warfare. Advances in weaponry, such as tanks, airplanes, machine guns, and poison gas, made combat more lethal and destructive than ever before. Trench warfare, which became synonymous with World War I, led to a horrific stalemate that resulted in millions of casualties. The war also heralded a new era in military strategy, as armies adapted to modern technologies, and new forms of warfare, like aerial and chemical warfare, were used with devastating effect. These technological innovations not only changed the nature of combat but also had a lasting impact on military tactics and warfare throughout the 20th century.

## Keywords

First world war, Central powers, Allies, Treaty of Versailles, Imperialism, Nationalism

## Discussion

World War I, also called First World War or Great War, an international conflict that in 1914–18 embroiled most of the nations of Europe along with Russia, the United States, the Middle East, and other regions. The war pitted the Central Powers - mainly Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey - against the Allies-mainly France, Great Britain, Russia, Italy, Japan, and, from 1917, the United States. It ended with the defeat of the Central Powers. The war was virtually unprecedented in slaughter, carnage, and destruction it caused. The main causes which led to the war are the following

### 6.1.1 Causes of World War I

#### 1. Imperialism

Imperialism is when a country increases their power and wealth by bringing additional territories under their control. Before World War I, Africa and parts of Asia were points of contention among the European countries. This was especially true because of the raw materials these areas could provide. The increasing competition and desire for greater empires led to an increase in confrontation

that helped push the world into world war.

#### 2. Militarism

As the world entered the 20th century, an arms race had begun. By 1914, Germany had the greatest increase in military buildup. Great Britain and Germany both greatly increased their navies in this time period. Further, in Germany and Russia particularly, the military establishment began to have a greater influence on public policy. This increase in militarism helped push the countries involved into war

#### 3. Nationalism

During the nineteenth century, Nationalism played an important role in Europe. Each nation of Europe had the slogan 'My Country is Great'. At first this insurgent nationalism took its birth in Germany. Its ruler Kaiser William II was the symbol of extreme nationalism. Influenced by him England, France, Holland and Austria also became proud about their nationalism. As a result there was internal rivalry among the countries.

Much of the origin of the war was based on the desire of the Slavic peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina to no longer be part of Austria Hungary but instead be part of Serbia. In this way, nationalism led directly to the War. But in a more general way, the nationalism of the various countries throughout Europe contributed not only to the beginning but the extension of the war in Europe. Each country tried to prove their dominance and power.

#### 4. Industrial Rivalry

Due to the Industrial Revolution, there was a revolutionary change in European economy. Different European nations established factories and tried for more production. There was competition among the European nations for the sale, of those products in cheap rate. Further, they engaged themselves to increase their capitals. These attempts created enmity between them.

#### 5. Competition in Trade

Competition in trade was another cause of the First World War. Owing to remarkable increase in their production, the European nations needed more markets. In order to export their products to other countries they searched out new markets. They attempted to prove themselves the best in the world.

They printed their own nation's brand on the products. The nations attempted to popularise the brand 'Made in England', 'Made in Germany', and 'Made in France' etc. in the World Markets. These trade rivalry, created bitterness among the European nations and they became hostile to each other.

#### 6. Colonialism

From the trade rivalry, Colonialism was born. The European nations began to Colonialise their trade centres established in Asia and Africa. England and France played important roles in this process. So, Germany became jealous of them. This created rivalry

among the European nations.

#### 7. Lack of an International Institutions

Before the First World War there was chaos and confusion in the whole of Europe. There was no international organisation like the League to maintain law and order at that time. All nations were free to do anything according to their selfish will. As a result of this, there was hatred and confusion which created chaos among the nations.

#### 8. Anglo-German Naval Competition

Anglo-German Naval Competition formed an important cause for the outbreak of the First World War. England felt that Germany had upset the European 'Balance of Power' by the increase of soldiers in her army. Further, England was threatened by Germany's bid for naval supremacy. England also started to increase her Naval Supremacy. This Anglo-German Competition paved the way for the outbreak of the First World War.

#### 9. Character of Kaiser William II

The character of the German Emperor Kaiser William II was responsible for the outbreak of the First World War. He attempted to make Germany the 'World Power'. When England proposed him to decrease his naval supremacy they did not listen to this. His anti-British attitude could not solve the Anglo-German rivalry. England banned Kaiser's Berlin – Baghdad railway. So the Anglo-Germany rivalry increased which paved the way for the First World War.

#### 10. Vast Competitive Armament

Another cause of the First World War was the vast competition in armament. After the establishment of military alliances, the European nations began to increase their armaments. This effort to increase armaments created rivalry among the countries.

The 'Army Law' of 1891 of Germany



Fig 6.1.1

Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, duchess of Hohenberg, riding in an open carriage at Sarajevo shortly before their assassination, June 28, 1914. *Henry Guttmann Collection—Hulton Archive/Getty Images*

and 'Navy Law' in 1906 increased the infantry and naval strength of Germany. England also strengthened Navy. France increased to soldiers and made the army training compulsory and increased duration from two years to three years. Russia also made some changes in Army Law. Thus, the whole of Europe was engaged in the preparation of War. This cleared the way for the First World War.

### 6.1.1.1 Immediate Cause

#### 1. Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

The immediate cause of World War I was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary. In June 1914, a Serbian-nationalist terrorist group called the Black Hand sent groups to assassinate the Archduke. Their first attempt failed when a driver avoided a grenade thrown at their car. However, Gavrilo Princip was a South Slav nationalist who assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian

throne, and his consort, Sophie, Duchess von Hohenberg (née Chotek), at Sarajevo, Bosnia, on June 28, 1914. This was in protest to Austria-Hungary having control of this region. Serbia wanted to take over Bosnia and Herzegovina. This assassination led to Austria-Hungary declaring war on Serbia. When Russia began to mobilize it support Serbia due to its alliance with that country, Germany declared war on Russia. Thus began the expansion of the war to include all those involved in the mutual defense alliances. Princip's act gave Austria-Hungary the excuse that it had sought for opening hostilities against Serbia and thus precipitated World War I. Austria saw the hand of Serbia behind assassination and served it with an ultimatum. Serbia refused to accept one of the demands of the ultimatum which went against the independence of Serbia. On 28 July 1914 Austria declared war on Serbia. Russia had promised full support to Serbia and started full scale preparations for war. On 1 August, Germany declared war on Russia and on 3 August on France. German

troops marched into Belgium to press on to France on 4 August and on the same day Britain declared war on Germany.

### 6.1.2 Course of World War 1

Germany had hoped that through a lightning strike through Belgium, it would be able to defeat France within 6 weeks and then turn against Russia on the basis of Schlieffen plan.

Schlieffen Plan, battle plan first proposed in 1905 by Alfred, Graf (count) von Schlieffen, chief of the German general staff, that was designed to allow Germany to wage a successful two-front war. The plan was heavily modified by Schlieffen's successor, Helmuth von Moltke, prior to and during its implementation in World War I. The plan seemed to succeed for a while and the German troops were within 20 km of Paris. Russia had opened attacks on Germany and Austria and some German troops had to be diverted to the eastern front. Soon the German advance on France was halted and war in Europe entered a long

period of stalemate. In the meantime the war had spread to many other parts of the world and battles were fought in West Asia, Africa and the Far East.

#### Trench Warfare

After the German advance had been halted, a new type of warfare developed. The warring armies dug trenches from which they conducted raids on each other. The kind of warfare that the armies were used to earlier - fighting in the open almost disappeared.

The first month of combat consisted of bold attacks and rapid troop movements on both fronts. In the west, Germany attacked first Belgium and then France. In the east, Russia attacked both Germany and Austria-Hungary. In the south, Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia. Following the Battle of the Marne (September 5–12, 1914), the western front became entrenched in central France and remained that way for the rest of the war. The fronts in the east also gradually locked into place.

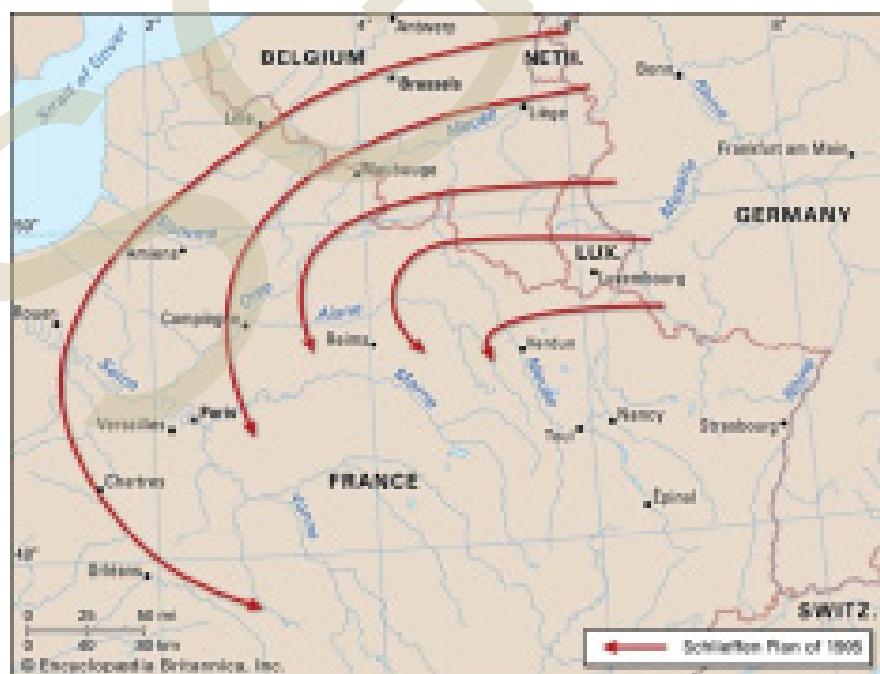


Fig 6.1.2 Map of the Schlieffen Plan

### 6.1.2.1 First Battle of the Marne

(September 5–12, 1914)-War was an offensive during World War I by the French army and the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) against the advancing Germans who had invaded Belgium and northeastern France and were within 30 miles (48 km) of Paris. The French threw back the massive German advance and thwarted German plans for a quick and total victory on the Western Front.

On the Eastern Front, Germany and Austria succeeded in repulsing the Russian attack and capturing parts of the Russian empire. They were also successful against Rumania, Serbia and Italy. Outside Europe, Japan occupied German possessions in East Asia, and Britain and France seized most of the German colonies in Africa.

### 6.1.2.2 Withdrawal of Russia from First World War

In a major development in 1917 Russia withdrew from the war after the October Revolution. The Russian revolutionaries had opposed the war from the beginning and under the leadership of Lenin decided to transform it into a revolutionary war to overthrow the Russian autocracy and to seize power. The Russian empire had suffered serious reverses in the war. The day after the Bolshevik government came to power, it issued the Decree on Peace with proposals to end the war without any annexations and indemnities. Russia decided to withdraw from the war and signed a peace treaty with Germany in March 1918. The Entente powers which were opposed to the revolution in Russia and to the Russian withdrawal from the war started their armed intervention in Russia in support of the elements which were opposed to the revolution. This led to a civil war which lasted for three years and ended with the defeat of foreign intervention and

of those Russians who had taken up arms against the revolutionary government.

### Treaties of Brest-Litovsk

Peace treaties signed at Brest-Litovsk (now in Belarus) by the Central Powers with the Ukrainian Republic (February 9, 1918) and with Soviet Russia (March 3, 1918), concluded hostilities between those countries during World War I. Peace negotiations, which the Soviet government had requested on November 8, 1917, began on December 22.

When no substantial progress had been made by January 18, the German general Max Hoffmann firmly presented the German demands, which included the establishment of independent states in the Polish and Baltic territories formerly belonging to the Russian Empire and in Ukraine. Leon Trotsky, head of the Soviet delegation since January 9, called for a recess (January 18–30). He returned to Petrograd where he persuaded the reluctant Bolsheviks (including Lenin) to adopt a policy under which Russia would leave the war but sign no peace treaty (“neither war nor peace”).

On March 3 the Soviet government accepted a treaty by which Russia lost Ukraine, its Polish and Baltic territories, and Finland. (Ukraine was recovered in 1919, during the Russian Civil War.) The treaty was ratified by the Congress of Soviets on March 15. Both the Ukrainian and Russian treaties were annulled by the Armistice on Nov. 11, 1918, which marked the Allied defeat of Germany.

### 6.1.2.3 Entry of USA in World War 1

On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany, marking its entry into World War I. By this time, the U.S. had become a crucial supplier of arms and other



Fig 6.1.3 Delegates at negotiations for the treaties of Brest-Litovsk, 1918.

*George Grantham Bain Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (digital file no. 26094)*

essential goods for the Entente powers. The sinking of the British ocean liner *Lusitania* by a German U-boat on May 7, 1915, played an indirect role in the U.S. joining the conflict. The *Lusitania*, traveling from New York to Liverpool, was carrying 173 tons of ammunition along with nearly 2,000 civilian passengers. Among the 1,198 people who perished in the attack were 128 U.S. citizens. The tragic loss of so many lives, particularly Americans, stirred intense outrage in the United States, and many anticipated that a declaration of war would soon follow. However, the U.S. government maintained its neutral stance, responding with diplomatic protests to Germany instead.

Despite this, Germany continued its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, and on August 17, 1915, sank the *Arabic*, which also carried U.S. and other neutral passengers. After a U.S. protest, Germany promised to ensure the safety of passengers before sinking ships. Yet, when the *Hesperia* was torpedoed soon after, the American public's anger toward Germany intensified. Americans were already leaning toward the Entente

powers, with economic interests playing a significant role. The Entente nations had borrowed substantial sums from U.S. banks to purchase arms and supplies, and many Americans had invested in these loans, which could only be repaid if the Entente won the war. Moreover, there was growing concern that if Germany emerged victorious, it would pose a significant threat to U.S. interests. The continued attacks on ships, including those with American passengers, ultimately led the U.S. to join the war effort.

### 6.1.3 End of First World War

Many efforts were made to bring the war to an end. In early 1917, a few socialist parties proposed the convening of an international socialist conference to draft proposals for ending the war without annexations and recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination. However, the conference could not be held. The proposal of the Bolshevik government in Russia to conclude a peace "without annexations and indemnities, on the basis of the self-determination of peoples" was welcomed by many people in



Fig 6.1.4 The *New York Herald* reporting the sinking of the *Lusitania*, a British ocean liner, by a German submarine on May 7, 1915. *Hulton Archive/Getty Images*

the countries which were at war. However, these proposals were rejected. The Pope also made proposals for peace but these too were not taken seriously. Though these efforts to end the war did not get any positive response from the governments of the warring countries, antiwar feelings grew among the people. There was widespread unrest and disturbances and even mutinies break out. In some countries, following the success of the Russian Revolution, the unrest was soon to take the form of uprisings to overthrow the governments.

In January 1918, President of the United States, proposed a peace programme. This has become famous as President Wilson's Fourteen Points. Some of these points were

accepted when the peace treaties were signed at the end of the war.

### 6.1.3.1 Surrender of Germany, Austria-Hungary

Britain, France and USA launched a military offensive in July 1918 and Germany and her allies began to collapse. Bulgaria withdrew from the war in September, and Turkey surrendered in October. Political discontent had been raising in Austria-Hungary and Germany. The emperor of Austria-Hungary surrendered on 3 November. In Germany revolution broke out. Germany became a republic and the German emperor Kaiser William II fled to Holland. The new German government signed an armistice on

11 November 1918 and the war was over.

The Paris Peace Conference ultimately produced five treaties, each named after the suburban locale in which it was signed: the Treaty of Versailles with Germany (June 28, 1919); the Treaty of Saint-Germain with Austria (Sept. 10, 1919); the Treaty of Neuilly with Bulgaria (Nov. 27, 1919); the Treaty of Trianon with Hungary (June 4, 1920); and the Treaty of Sèvres with Ottoman Turkey (Aug. 10, 1920).

### 6.1.3.2 Treaty of Versailles

Peace document signed at the end of World War I by the Allied and associated powers in the Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles on June 28, 1919. It took force on January 10, 1920. The conference was dominated by the national leaders known as the “Big Four”- David Lloyd George, the prime minister of the United Kingdom; Georges Clemenceau, the prime minister of France; Woodrow Wilson, the president of the United States; and Vittorio Orlando, the prime minister of Italy. The German delegates were presented with a fait accompli. They were shocked at the severity of the terms and protested the contradictions between the assurances made when the armistice was negotiated and the actual treaty. Accepting the “war guilt” clause and the reparation terms was especially odious to them. On June 28, 1919, the Treaty of Versailles was signed at the Palace of Versailles outside Paris, France. The treaty was one of several that officially ended five years of conflict known as the Great War-World War I. The Treaty of Versailles outlined the conditions of peace between Germany and the victorious Allies, led by the United States, France, and the United Kingdom. Other Central Powers (significantly, Austria-Hungary) signed different treaties with the Allies.

#### Territorial loses:

- ◆ The Saar administered by the League of Nations

- ◆ The creation of an independent Polish state
- ◆ West Prussia and Posen were given to Poland
- ◆ Alsace-Lorraine was given back to France
- ◆ Danzig was appointed as an international city
- ◆ Plebiscites in Upper Silesia, West Prussia and Schleswig
- ◆ Germany lost colonies and investments

#### Military Restrictions on Germany:

- ◆ Was only allowed a regular army that was limited to 100,000 military personnel
- ◆ Was not allowed an air force and only a very small fleet
- ◆ End of compulsory enlistment into the armed forces
- ◆ Rhineland to be occupied for 15 years by the allied military forces
- ◆ All commissions in Germany controlled by the allies until 1927

#### Reparations:

- ◆ Germany to pay £6,600 million (132 billion gold marks)
- ◆ Reparations to be paid in regular instalments, some in gold and some in goods
- ◆ The Allies struggled to get payments from Germany from 1921 to 1923
- ◆ Dawes Commission 1924
- ◆ France took over Ruhr in 1923

The Treaty of Versailles is one of the most controversial armistice treaties in history. The treaty's so-called "war guilt" clause forced Germany and other Central Powers to take all the blame for World War I. This meant a loss of territories, reduction in military forces, and reparation payments to Allied powers.

#### 6.1.4 Consequences of First World War

##### 6.1.4.1 Political Consequences

**Collapse of Empires:** The war directly led to the collapse of four major empires:

- ◆ **The Austro-Hungarian Empire:** Disintegrated into several new nation-states, including Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and parts of Yugoslavia. The dissolution of this multi-ethnic empire exacerbated ethnic tensions in Central and Eastern Europe.
- ◆ **The Ottoman Empire:** Suffered territorial losses and ultimately disintegrated, giving way to the creation of modern Turkey in 1923 under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, as well as the reconfiguration of much of the Middle East.
- ◆ **The Russian Empire:** The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, fueled by discontent with the war, led to the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II and the establishment of the Soviet Union.
- ◆ **The German Empire:** The abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the establishment of the Weimar Republic marked the end of the imperial system in Germany.

**The League of Nations:** The war's aftermath saw the formation of the League of

Nations in 1920, an international organization intended to maintain peace and prevent future conflicts. However, its effectiveness was hampered by the absence of the United States, which did not ratify the Treaty of Versailles, and by the reluctance of member states to enforce its decisions.

##### 6.1.4.2 Economic Consequences

**Massive Economic Losses:** The war had a profound impact on the economies of the belligerent nations. The Allied and Central Powers incurred enormous costs for the war effort, leading to widespread economic instability. Countries like France, Germany, and the UK faced crippling war debts. In particular:

- ◆ **Germany:** Forced to pay heavy reparations under Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles (the War Guilt Clause), which led to severe economic hardship, hyperinflation in the 1920s, and the destabilization of the Weimar Republic.
- ◆ **France and Britain:** While the UK had a stronger economy post-war, both nations experienced significant debt burdens that affected their domestic economies.

**Economic Shifts:** The war shifted the global economic balance, particularly in terms of the dominance of the United States. The U.S. emerged as the world's largest creditor nation, while European economies struggled to recover. The global economy also became increasingly interconnected, with trade routes reoriented and new sources of raw materials sought, particularly in the Middle East and Africa.

**The Great Depression (1929):** While not an immediate consequence, the economic turmoil caused by the war set the

stage for the global economic downturn of the Great Depression. High war debts, economic instability, and the failure of the League of Nations to prevent protectionist trade policies contributed to the global economic crisis that began in 1929.

### 6.1.4.3 Social Consequences

#### Loss of Life and Physical Destruction:

The human cost of World War I was staggering, with an estimated 10 million soldiers and 7 million civilians dead, in addition to the millions more wounded or psychologically scarred. The war caused profound social dislocation, with entire communities and families decimated, and many soldiers returning home to societies that struggled to reintegrate them.

**Social Changes and Women's Role:** World War I had a lasting impact on gender roles. As men went to the front lines, women took on roles in factories, offices, and in the military, contributing significantly to the war effort. Following the war, many women's rights movements gained momentum, leading to the extension of voting rights to women in several countries, including the United States (1920) and Britain (1918).

**Mental Health:** The trauma of the war, including the widespread use of trench warfare, led to the recognition of "shell shock" (now understood as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD). This recognition of psychological damage marked the beginning of a new understanding of mental health and its treatment.

## Recap

- ◆ Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy formed the Triple Alliance; France, Russia, and England created Triple Entente.
- ◆ The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand triggered a chain reaction among alliances, sparking World War I.
- ◆ Imperialism fuelled rivalries as European nations sought power by controlling territories in Asia and Africa.
- ◆ Militarism intensified arms races, especially between Germany and Britain, escalating tensions before the war.
- ◆ Nationalism caused internal rivalries as nations prioritised dominance, fueling competition and eventual conflict.
- ◆ Industrial and trade rivalries among European nations created economic tensions and hostility before WWI.
- ◆ Anglo-German Naval Competition heightened enmity as Germany threatened England's naval supremacy.
- ◆ The Moroccan and Bosnian crises worsened relations, demonstrating Europe's inability to maintain peace.
- ◆ Lack of international institutions before WWI allowed unchecked rivalries,

leading to chaos and eventual war.

- ◆ President Wilson's Fourteen Points: Proposed in January 1918, influencing the peace treaties signed at the war's end.
- ◆ Treaty of Versailles signed in 1919, it imposed territorial losses, military restrictions, and reparations on Germany.

## Objective Questions

1. Why did Russia quit fighting World War I?
2. Which weapon was first used at the Battle of the Somme in World War I?
3. Who was president of the United States during World War I?
4. On which continent was World War I mostly fought?
5. Which treaty formalised the collapse of the Habsburg empire after World War I?
6. What was the name given to the German battle plan proposed in 1905 and used, in modified form, during World War I?
7. When was the Treaty of Versailles signed?

## Answers

1. Communist takeover
2. Tank
3. Woodrow Wilson
4. Europe
5. Treaty of Saint-Germaine
6. Schlieffen Plan
7. 1919

## Assignments

1. Analyse the role of the Treaty of Versailles in shaping the post-World War I global order.
2. Examine the political and social consequences of World War I, with reference to the collapse of empires and the rise of new nation-states.
3. Discuss the economic impact of World War I on the belligerent nations
4. How did mutual defense agreements contribute to the outbreak and spread of World War I?
5. Examine the immediate and long-term causes of World War I.

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# Fourteen Points and League of Nations

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ understand the importance of Woodrow Wilson's 14 points
- ♦ understand principles of global peace.
- ♦ understand the role of the League of Nations which was established at the end of World War I as an international peacekeeping organisation.
- ♦ understand the organisational and administrative system of the League of Nations

### Prerequisites

The 14 Points were a set of proposals put forward by the U.S. President Woodrow Wilson in January 1918 as a blueprint for achieving a just and lasting peace following the devastation of World War I. Wilson's vision for post-war reconstruction was grounded in idealistic principles aimed at preventing future conflicts and fostering international cooperation. These points included the establishment of open diplomacy, freedom of navigation, reduction of national armaments, and the promotion of self-determination for nations. Wilson emphasised the necessity of creating a new international organisation to uphold these principles - the League of Nations.

The League of Nations was conceived as a permanent institution to provide a platform for dialogue among nations, settle disputes peacefully, and ensure collective security. Its primary goals were to promote international cooperation, reduce armaments, and prevent the outbreak of future wars through diplomacy and mutual guarantees of security. The idea of the League was articulated as part of Wilson's broader vision for a "new world order" based on the rule of law and respect for national sovereignty.

Although Wilson's 14 Points were met with mixed reactions from European

leaders, particularly those from France and Britain, who sought more punitive measures against Germany, they became the foundation for the Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1919. The Treaty, which officially ended World War I, incorporated several of Wilson's ideas, including the creation of the League of Nations. However, the U.S. Senate ultimately rejected the Treaty, and the United States never became a member of the League.

The League of Nations, despite its lofty goals, struggled with its effectiveness, particularly in the face of rising nationalism and aggression from totalitarian regimes in the 1930s. Its failure to prevent the outbreak of World War II underscored its limitations. Nonetheless, the League of Nations provided important lessons for international diplomacy and paved the way for the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, which sought to build on the lessons learned and rectify the shortcomings of its predecessor.

## Keywords

Woodrow Wilson, 14 Points, Development, Peace, League of Nations

## Discussion

### 6.2.1 President Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points (1918)

In his January 8, 1918, address to Congress, President Woodrow Wilson proposed a 14-point program for world peace. These points were later taken as the basis for peace negotiations at the end of World War I.

In January 8, in his 1918, speech on War Aims and Peace Terms, President Wilson set down 14 points as a blueprint for world peace, that was to be used for peace negotiations after World War I. The details of the speech were based on reports generated by "The Inquiry," a group of about 150 political and social scientists organised by Wilson's adviser and long-time friend, Col. Edward M House. Their job was to study Allied and American policy in virtually every region of the globe and analyse economic,

social, and political facts likely to come up in discussions during the peace conference. The team began its work in secret, and in the end produced and collected nearly 2,000 separate reports and documents plus at least 1,200 maps.

In the speech, Wilson directly addressed what he perceived as the causes for the world war by calling for the abolition of secret treaties, a reduction in armaments, an adjustment in colonial claims in the interests of both native peoples and colonists, and freedom of the seas. Wilson also made proposals that would ensure world peace in the future. For example, he proposed the removal of economic barriers between nations, the promise of "self-determination" for oppressed minorities, and a world organisation that would provide a system of collective security for all nations. Wilson's



Fig 6.2.1 President Woodrow Wilson delivering his Fourteen Points to Congress

14 Points were designed to undermine the Central Powers' will to continue, and to inspire the Allies to victory. The 14 Points were broadcast throughout the world and were showered from rockets and shells behind the enemy's lines.

When Allied leaders met in Versailles, France, to formulate the treaty to end World War I with Germany and Austria-Hungary, most of Wilson's 14 Points were scuttled by the leaders of England and France. To his dismay, Wilson discovered that England, France, and Italy were mostly interested in regaining what they had lost and gaining more by punishing Germany. Germany quickly found out that Wilson's blueprint for world peace would not apply to them.

However, Wilson's capstone point calling for a world organisation that would provide some system of collective security was incorporated into the Treaty of Versailles. This organisation would later be known as the League of Nations. Though Wilson launched a tireless missionary campaign to overcome opposition in the U.S. Senate to the adoption of the treaty and membership in the League, the treaty was never adopted by the Senate, and the United States never joined the League of Nations. Wilson would later suggest that without American participation

in the League, there would be another world war within a generation.

### 6.2.1.1 Fourteen Points

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.
3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.
4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point

consistent with domestic safety.

5. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.
6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of its own political development and national policy and assure it's a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of its own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that it may need and may itself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of Russia's needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.
7. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which Russia enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.
8. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.
9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognisable lines of nationality.
10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development.
11. The relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.
12. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are

now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

13. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.
14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

Eight of the fourteen points treated specific territorial issues among the combatant nations. Five of the other six concerned general principles for a peaceful world: open covenants (i.e. treaties or agreements) openly arrived at; freedom of the seas; free trade; reduction of armaments; and adjustment of colonial claims based on the principles of self-determination. The fourteenth point proposed what was to become the League of Nations to guarantee the “political independence and territorial integrity of great and small states alike.”

Though Wilson’s idealism pervades the Fourteen Points, he also had more practical objectives in mind. He hoped to keep Russia in the war by convincing the Bolsheviks

that they would receive a better peace from the Allies, to bolster Allied morale, and to undermine German war support. The address was immediately hailed in the United States and Allied nations, and even by Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin, as a landmark of enlightenment in international relations. Wilson subsequently used the Fourteen Points as the basis for negotiating the Treaty of Versailles that ended the war. Although the Treaty did not fully realise Wilson’s unselfish vision, the Fourteen Points still stand as the most powerful expression of the idealist strain in United States diplomacy.

### 6.2.3 Foundation of the League of Nations (1920-1946)

The founding of the League of Nations In 1918, a little more than a hundred years after the foundation of the first peace societies in the United States and England (and with the support of both countries’ Leagues to Enforce Peace), the idea of a “League of Nations” took form with the pledge to prevent future wars. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States of America was one of its most powerful advocates, and in December of 1918, he chaired the Peace Conference in Paris.

President Wilson was made Chairman of the Committee established to formulate a list of “rules and regulations” for an international organisation whose purpose was to preserve world peace through open diplomacy and global consensus. The resulting document was the draft of an agreement or “Covenant” between nations. Less than four months later, on 29 April 1919, the final version of the Covenant of the League of Nations was adopted, and it became Part I of the Treaty of Versailles. In accordance with President Wilson’s ideals, the Covenant outlined the League of Nations’ three basic objectives: to ensure collective security, to assure functional cooperation, and to execute

the mandates of peace treaties. However, the League of Nations could only begin to function, formally and officially, after the Peace Treaty of Versailles came into effect. Thus, the League of Nations was officially inaugurated on 10 January 1920. The 32 original Members of the League of Nations were also Signatories of the Versailles Treaty. In addition, 13 additional States were invited to accede to the Covenant. The League of Nations was open to all other States, providing they fulfilled certain requirements. Those which had obtained a two-thirds majority of “yes” votes cast in the Assembly were admitted.

### **6.2.3.1 The Covenant of the League of Nations**

The Covenant of the League of Nations consists of a short foreword or “Preamble” which introduces its three primary objectives; the 26 Articles which follow outline the means of carrying them out. In general, Article 1 describes the conditions of membership, admission and withdrawal. Articles 2 to 5 specify the nature and power of the Assembly and the Council, the two main bodies of the Organisation. Articles 6 to 7 discuss the appointment of a Secretary-General, the establishment of the League of Nations’ Secretariat at Geneva, and its budget. Articles 8 to 9 deal with the subject of disarmament and the League of Nations’ objective of reducing the number of arms to the lowest possible level through open discussion between Members. Articles 10 to 21 clarify the political and social mandates the newly formed international organisation was expected to carry out, spelling out the obligations and rights of the Member States in order to promote international cooperation, and thus achieve international peace and collective security. Articles 22 to 23 detail the League of Nations’ intention of extending international relations in the fields of finance, trade, transport by land, sea

and air as well as the promotion of health and the struggle against drugs, prostitution and slavery. Articles 24 to 25 deal with the transfer of already established agencies and the commitment to encourage and support the aims of the Red Cross. Finally, Article 26 explains how Members should proceed when amendments to the Covenant are deemed necessary.

### **6.2.3.2 The Main Bodies of the League of Nations**

The League of Nations consisted of the Assembly and the Council (both assisted by the Permanent Secretariat), and the Permanent Court of International Justice. In September of each year, an Assembly of all the Member States met in Geneva. Each Member State had one vote and was permitted up to three delegates. Amongst other things, the Assembly dealt with such matters as the UNOG Library, Registry, Records and Archives Unit budget, the admission of new members, all matters affecting world peace, making amendments to the Covenant, and electing non-permanent members to the Council. Paul Hymans of Belgium acted as President of the First Assembly, and after the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald attended the Assembly in 1924, other prime and foreign ministers followed suit.

The Council was a coalition of the four permanent members: France, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom. Germany joined in 1926, but left in 1935. In September 1934, the Soviet Union entered the League of Nations. Up to 10 non-permanent Council members were elected by the Assembly for a three-year period. The most important task of the Council was to settle international disputes. It met three times a year and reported to the Assembly on its activities. Its first President was Lord Balfour, the Council’s British representative.

The Permanent Secretariat, appointed



by the Secretary-General, was given the task of working out the methodology of international cooperation. The Secretariat was also responsible for the general administrative tasks of the League of Nations, in addition to the registration and publication of the Treaties ratified between Member States. The Permanent Court of International Justice, consisting of 11 judges and four deputy judges, was established in The Hague to "hear and determine any dispute of an international character which the parties thereto submit to it".

Brussels and Geneva were the two cities competing to become the seat of the new organisation. The final decision in Geneva's favour was influenced by President Wilson, who favoured it primarily because of Switzerland's neutrality. He felt that if Germany ever did join the League of Nations, it would be a far more acceptable place because the painful memories associated with Belgium could be avoided. In 1920, the preliminary office of the League of Nations moved from London to the Palais Wilson (formerly the Hôtel National) in Geneva. During the 1920s, the League of Nations also held its Council meetings and conferences in the Palais Wilson. The assemblies, however, were held in the Salle de la Réformation, and after 1930, in the Bâtiment Electoral in Geneva. In March 1926, the Extraordinary Assembly decided to hold an international architectural competition for the design of the new buildings for the organisation. Some 377 plans were submitted, and an international jury awarded nine first prizes of 12,000 Swiss francs each. Five architects, Nénot and Lefèvre (Paris), Flegenheimer (Geneva), Broggi (Rome) and Vágó (Budapest) were chosen to design the final plans. On 7 September 1929, the foundation stone was laid in Ariana Park, which was given to the City of Geneva by Gustave Revilliod upon his death in 1890. When the League of Nations finally moved

into its new home in 1936, the costs for the Palais des Nations had exceeded 29 million Swiss francs. John D. Rockefeller Jr.'s gift of US\$ 2 million made the addition of a unique Library possible.

### 6.2.3.3 Achievements of League of Nations: Disputes Settlements

**Settlement of disputes** The League of Nations' primary objective was to settle disputes by any means other than outright war. However, reaching this objective depended on the willingness of the sovereign States in question to cooperate with the League of Nations and to respect the maxims of the Covenant. By the time it folded, more than 60 international disputes had been brought before the League of Nations. During the first 10 years of its existence, only eight of the 30 disputants resorted to hostilities or war. Some of the peaceful settlements included: -

#### ♦ The Åland Islands

After the Russian Revolution, Finland declared its independence and sovereignty over these Islands. However, its Swedish-speaking population claimed it had the right to vote for Swedish governance. Before it could develop into an armed conflict, both parties accepted the solution offered by the League of Nations. Though autonomy under Finnish rule was continued, important guarantees were granted to the Åland Islands, and demilitarisation under League of Nations observance was carried out.

#### ♦ Vilna

Both Lithuania and Poland were claiming sovereignty over Vilna, and in 1922, the League of Nations was called in. Despite the Council's recommendation that the city be placed under Lithuanian rule the disputing States were unable to reach an agreement

acceptable to all. Consequently, when the Conference of Ambassadors redefined the Polish border in 1923, Vilna became part of Poland.

#### ♦ Memel

After the First World War, this previously Baltic port on the Eastern frontiers of Germany was taken over by the Allies under a provisional administration responsible to the League of Nations' Conference of Ambassadors. After a coup d'état, the port came under Lithuanian sovereignty. Special privileges were granted to the mostly German population as well as to Poland, which received the right to use the port for transit and trade.

#### ♦ The Greco-Bulgarian Conflict (1925) and Leticia (1932)

There existed in the Covenant a provision that empowered the League of Nations to take action and even impose sanctions (within specific guidelines) in order to settle international disputes brought before the Council by any one of its Member States. One such case arose when, in 1925, a border conflict broke out between Greece and Bulgaria that threatened to escalate into an all-out war in the Balkans. The Bulgarian Government appealed at once to the League of Nations (under Article 10 of the Covenant) and an Extraordinary Session of the Council was called, and subsequently held in Paris. Aristide Briand, the representative of France, acted as Chairman. Under the observation of the British, French and Italian military attachés, the hostilities ceased and the evacuation of the territory occupied by Greek forces was carried out without incident. This conflict is but one of the few in which the system as outlined in the Covenant was successful; a conflict was identified, the Council met without delay, a fair hearing was given, and a general agreement arrived

at for maintaining the peace and providing justice for all concerned. A more complicated example of an international dispute requiring the League of Nations' assistance was that which took place between Colombia and Peru over Leticia, a remote border district in the Upper Amazon valley. After several attempts to solve the problem on a regional level, the Peruvian and Colombian delegates finally turned to the League of Nations for assistance in 1933. However, it was only after Luis Sanchez Cerro, the Peruvian president, was assassinated that an agreement could be reached. After the ownership of the Letician territory was transferred to an International Commission for one year, it was returned to Colombia.

#### ♦ China: The Manchurian Crisis of 1932

On 19 September 1931, the League of Nations was made aware of an incident provoked by ant Japanese activists at the Japanese-owned South Manchurian railway line in China. Consequently, the Japanese army invaded the Chinese province of Manchuria. China immediately appealed to the world's powers for their intervention. Under the chairmanship of Aristide Briand, and with the active participation of the United States of America (which had thus far refrained from recognising the League of Nations as a global mediator), the Council attempted to negotiate a peaceful solution. However, neither the Council nor the Assembly was able to agree on the imposition of sanctions of any kind, which in accordance with the Covenant, could have been used against any Member State that had violated the principles of the League of Nations. Four months after the initial outbreak of hostilities, the Council dispatched an Inquiry Commission to China under the leadership of the British diplomat, the Earl of Lytton. By the time the so-called Lytton Commission finally arrived in China in April of 1932,

the Japanese Army had already installed the Manchurian State of Manchukuo. In order to determine the source of the conflict and to come up with possible measures to restore the peace between China and Japan, the Commission began its investigations with the assistance of George Moss, a member of the British Consular Service who was also fluent in Chinese. On the advice of the Lytton Report (September 1932), the League of Nations refused to recognise Manchukuo as a genuine State and proposed a series of measures to re-establish the status quo. While China accepted the League of Nations' recommendations for restoring peace in the area, Japan did not and, as a result, withdrew from the League of Nations in 1935.

#### ♦ Ethiopia (Abyssinia)

In 1933, the Fascist Government of Benito Mussolini planned its attack on Ethiopia with the intention to expand the colonial territory of Italy, despite the fact that in 1928 it had signed the Italo-Ethiopian Treaty of Friendship, Conciliation and Arbitration. In December of 1934, a clash occurred between the armed forces of the two States at Walwal on the Ethiopian side of the frontier with Italian Somaliland. Mussolini declared the incident "an act of self-defence" and, therefore, not subject to arbitration. Compensation was demanded in addition to formal recognition of the area as Italian. When this was refused by Emperor of Ethiopia Haile Selassie, the case was taken as a *casus bello* by Italy. As a Member of the League of Nations, Ethiopia brought the case before the Council, but in order to continue his pursuit of expansion, Mussolini ignored all League of Nations proposals and mobilised his military forces in the northern Ethiopian state of Eritrea. Rounds of talks in Geneva proved futile, a clear indication that the Council was unable to protect a small Member State from the interests of a larger and more influential one and, as a result, oil sanctions that would

have halted Mussolini's military endeavours were not imposed. Thus, armed with a deadly combination of superior weaponry and poison gas, Italy was able to launch an attack on Ethiopia in December 1935. Once Addis Ababa fell in May 1936, Emperor Haile Selassie, who was in Geneva at the time, went to the Assembly and again asked the League of Nations for help, but to no avail, as Italy's conquest had been formally recognised by most countries. However, Mussolini's declaration of war on France and the United Kingdom provoked the latter into facilitating the Emperor's recapture of his country, and by 1941, the Ethiopian Government was back in power and Ethiopia became an independent State.

### 6.2.3.4 International Reconciliation and Disarmament

#### ♦ The Locarno Pact in 1925

With Gustav Stresemann becoming head of Germany's Foreign Office, a more liberal foreign policy was ready to consider cooperating with the League of Nations rather than viewing the new organisation as an instrument set up to suppress Germany. Thus, in December of 1924, Stresemann dispatched an application for Germany's admission to the Council in which he requested (among other things) a seat on the Council and special treatment concerning hostile actions to be taken against any Covenant-breaking State. Because of the latter request, admission was denied. In early 1925, Stresemann made a second attempt. Even though the Geneva Protocol was not yet in force, its principles of "security" made the follow-up application possible. Stresemann proposed to the British and French Foreign Offices his guarantee of Germany's intent to respect the Treaty of Versailles. After the exchange of Stresemann's proposals between London, Paris and Berlin, Sir Austen Chamberlain and Aristide Briand invited Member States to a

common meeting in Locarno, Switzerland. Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Poland were also invited to join the meeting. The negotiations held in October 1925 resulted in the Locarno Pact, signed by Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. In addition, four arbitration conventions were signed between Germany and the following States: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France and Poland. Thus, Locarno prepared the ground for reconciliation between Germany and her neighbours Belgium and France, and for Germany's eventual entry into the League of Nations in 1926. However, in 1933, shortly after Nazism took control of the country, Germany withdrew her membership from the League of Nations.

#### ♦ Briand's Plan for a European Union

The original idea of a "United States of Europe" can be traced back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; however, it was Aristide Briand who revitalised the concept at the end of the 1920s. Briand and those in favour of a "European Union" believed that its realisation depended on the establishment of new institutions which would cooperate with those of the League of Nations, yet would be independent of them in all essential aspects. Upon further discussion, it was decided that the creation of such a union should occur entirely within the framework of the League of Nations. During the 1929 Assembly, Briand promised the 27 invited European Member States that he would submit a more detailed plan that they could then discuss. While other Members waited without further commitment for Briand's plan to evolve, Stresemann supported Briand's plan and spoke out on the need for European stamps, a European Customs Union, and a European coinage in order to remain economically competitive with forces outside Europe. By the time Briand's proposal was ready for discussion in May

1930, Stresemann had died and Europe was in the process of undergoing some drastic changes in the form of growing levels of unemployment and nationalism. However, Briand's proposal was brought before the 1931 Assembly and it was agreed to go ahead with plans to establish a Commission of Inquiry for European Union. Briand was elected as Chairman and Sir Eric Drummond as Secretary. The practical activities of the Commission of Inquiry merged with the general work of the League of Nations for the purpose of economic cooperation. In addition, the Commission was a catalyst in bringing the Soviet Union and Turkey into closer cooperation with the League of Nations after inviting the two States to join the Commission.

#### ♦ The Geneva Protocol and the Disarmament Conference of 1932

Disarmament was one of the most important questions to be considered by the League of Nations. The condition, however, was that Germany would agree to the Treaty of Versailles and would be the first country to reduce its arms in accordance with the Treaty. The Advisory Commission and the Temporary Mixed Commission (later replaced by a so-called "Coordination Commission") were bodies entrusted with the creation of a plan for disarmament. The issue was discussed in each Assembly and in many sessions of the Council and other special meetings, but all these efforts failed in the end. One of the main obstacles faced was the belief of the main Powers that their security depended on maintaining a level of armaments equal or even superior to those of their neighbours. They also preferred to determine their own needs in armaments. Another problem was that the Soviet Union and the United States of America, not being members of the League of Nations, did not take part in the process until 1932. Thus, the Draft

Treaty of Mutual Guarantees (1922) and the Treaty of Mutual Assistance (1923), piloted by Lord Cecil with the close cooperation of Edouard Benes and the French delegation, were not accepted in the Assemblies. The new more liberal Governments in France under Edouard Herriot and in the United Kingdom under Ramsay MacDonald brought a new spirit to the disarmament negotiations and as a result the fifth Assembly adopted the Geneva Protocol on the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, in October 1924, proposing the general disarmament of all nations linked with compulsory arbitration and security guarantees. It also pledged that a general Disarmament Conference would be convened shortly. This Conference eventually convened in 1932 and lasted, with a short interruption, for two and a half years. Despite numerous petitions and public demand for disarmament, the countries were not ready to sacrifice their security. Thus, the Conference was a failure.

### **The Protection of Minorities**

After the war, the new Eastern European States of Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia were forced to sign agreements granting religious, social and political equality to their minorities, whether or not they had been defeated. In order to supervise these agreements, the League of Nations set up the Minority Section, whose influential programmes were rather unique at that time. Its responsibilities included screening the incoming petitions, requesting responses from the accused States, forwarding cases to the ad hoc "Committee of Three", and/or investigating matters on its own. If a case appeared before the Committee, a decision had to be made as to whether or not the Council's involvement was warranted. In the beginning, the reports were unofficial; however, after 1929, the Council decided that the reports were to be published in the

League of Nations' Official Journal. Between 1920 and 1939, 883 petitions were submitted to the Minorities Section. Only 16 of the 395 petitions deemed "receivable" ever reached the attention of the Council, and of these 16, the Council very reluctantly condemned the accused State of improper treatment in only four cases. Due to the efforts of Erik Colban, the first director of the Minority Section, a more personal approach was developed. The Section officials would investigate matters locally and pursue their findings. This close cooperation between the Section and the accused States made it possible in many cases to avoid further aggravation and alleviate future problems.

### **The Mandate System**

As a result of the war, the Allied and associated Powers acquired the territories that were previously under the sovereignty of Germany and the Ottoman Empire. As their inhabitants were at this time considered incapable of ruling themselves, the Peace Conference of 1919 decided that they should be ruled by mandate, whereby powers were conferred upon a State chosen by the League of Nations to govern a region elsewhere in order "to secure the well-being and development of the peoples who inhabited the territories in question". Belgium, the British Empire, and France were entrusted with the governance of the mandated territories. In accordance with the Covenant, annual reports concerning these regions were to be submitted to the League of Nations' Permanent Mandate Commission, established in February of 1921. It was on the basis of these reports that the Commission advised the Council as to whether or not the conditions of each mandate were being strictly observed. The members of the Commission were nominated by the Council, and because of the need for impartiality, it was preferred that they come from non-mandated Powers. As a result, the Commission was trusted and often consulted

by both mandated and non-mandated Powers during its last years. Three categories of mandates, "A", "B" and "C", were applied "according to the stage of the development of the people, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions and other similar circumstances" (Article 22, paragraph 3). Under the United Nations, the work of the Mandates Commission continued through the Trusteeship Council, though it was no longer composed of non-governmental representatives. However, as the previously mandated countries have become officially recognized as sovereign and independent States, its responsibilities have steadily diminished.

#### ♦ **The Saar and the Free City of Danzig**

One of the unique responsibilities assigned to the League of Nations by the Treaty of Versailles was the supervision of the former German border territories of the Saar basin and the Free City of Danzig. As stated in the 1920 Treaty, the Territory of the Saar basin was to be placed under the administration of the League of Nations for 15 years. During that time, the Saar was to be isolated from the rest of Germany, and as compensation for the war, France was given control of its coal mines. The administration of the Saar was entrusted to a Governing Commission consisting of five members chosen by the Council of the League of Nations: one representative of France, one native German inhabitant of the Saar, and three representatives of countries other than France and Germany. On 13 January 1935, the inhabitants of the Saar determined their sovereignty by plebiscite. On that day, order was guaranteed by an International Police Force composed of British, Dutch, Italian, and Swedish soldiers. Over 90 per cent of the votes cast called for the immediate reintegration of the Saar into Germany. This decision took effect on 1 March 1935. The

inhabitants of the Free City of Danzig and the territory surrounding it were primarily of German nationality. However, Poland needed to have access to the sea. In accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations established a High Commission to oversee this district. Danzig was to be self-governing, though under the League of Nations' protection. Poland, however, was to govern the City's foreign affairs and maintain certain transit, postal and harbour rights. The High Commissioner appointed by the Council was to reside in Danzig and make the final decision in cases when mutual agreement between disputants could not be reached.

### **6.2.3.5 Other Activities**

#### ♦ **The Financial Reconstruction of Austria and Hungary**

The Economic and Financial Section consisted primarily of an Economic Committee. It was founded at the Brussels Financial Conference of 1920 which was attended by 39 States concerned with the enormous task of analysing Europe's post-war financial disorder, and of finding ways to overcome it. The members of the Committee were appointed not by their Governments but by the Council of the League of Nations, and most of the ensuing decisions and actions resulting in Europe's financial reconstruction were based on its findings. The Republic of Austria, with its seven million inhabitants, soon ran into serious economic and financial difficulty after its foundation in 1919. During the first three years of its existence, huge sums of public money intended for charitable purposes and other causes had accomplished nothing in the way of reconstructing the economy. In 1922, when Chancellor Seipel addressed the League of Nations to request assistance, a detailed programme was put in place to balance the Austrian budget within approximately two years, and the country

was given a loan of £ stg. 26 million. In 1924, under the control of the League of Nations, the internal economy and the public financial system were reformed, and the budget was balanced without drawing upon the loan, which was subsequently used for reconstruction work. In 1926, League of Nations' control was withdrawn. When the case of the financial reconstruction of Hungary came up in 1923, it was dealt with in a similar fashion, with £ stg. 10 million being loaned to the country by the League of Nations. Jeremiah Smith, from the United States of America, was appointed Commissioner-General in Budapest, and within one year, months ahead of schedule, the Hungarian budget showed a credit balance. A sizeable loan was also given to Greece, a country with only four million inhabitants at that time, to cope with the influx of more than one million Greek refugees from Asia Minor. Similar help was granted under League of Nations auspices to Bulgaria, and to the City of Danzig.

#### ♦ The International Economic Conferences of 1927 and 1933

First International Economic Conference under the auspices of the League of Nations was held in Geneva in May of 1927. It was attended by representatives of 50 countries, including the Soviet Union and the United States of America. The two main objectives of the Conference were: to reinforce international trade laws, and to halt the widespread practice of tariff increases. The final Convention was signed by 29 States, each of whom agreed to act collectively to carry out its recommendations. Despite this Convention, however, States began reducing their imports and increasing their exports in their own interests due to the rise of economic nationalism all over the world. This caused a global economic crisis that increasingly threatened the stability of international relations and fostered the renewal of Franco-German and Franco-Italian

tensions.

As a result of requests put forth by Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom, the League of Nations' Economic and Financial Commission arranged for a Second Conference to be held in London in June 1933. Delegates from 64 countries assembled with two goals in mind, to stabilise international monetary standards, and to have prices rise at a steady and reasonable rate. This Conference was a complete failure, as no State was prepared to voluntarily give up any of its own financial and economic strengths. The result was worldwide unemployment and collective insecurity. Thereafter, the Economic and Financial Section of the League of Nations decided to focus more on the cooperation of individuals rather than of States, and thus began to work more closely with the Health Organisation, the International Labour Office, and the International Institute of Agriculture in Rome.

#### ♦ The Traffic in Women and the Protection of Children

In 1904 and 1910, several agreements intended to protect the rights of women and children were put in place by a number of States. As a result, Article 23 of the Covenant entrusted the League of Nations with supervising the execution of these agreements, and in 1921, an International Conference held in Geneva drew up a Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children that was ratified by 48 States. The Assembly launched two extensive enquiries in order to assemble data for the campaign against such traffic in both the East and the West. In February of 1937, a Conference of Central Authorities of Eastern Countries was held at Bandung, Java. Several committees succeeded in discussing and improving some conditions. For example, in a number of countries, the age of marriage and consent was legally raised and licensed brothels were

abolished. The rights of illegitimate children were also discussed.

In addition, 50 countries accepted the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1924), which dealt with issues such as the placement of children in families, the support of blind children, and the effects of economic depression and unemployment on children and young people. In 1934, the Assembly established an Information Centre for questions regarding child welfare. The Centre collected and classified as much information as possible on this subject. All printed material was collected and housed in the League of Nations' Library. After 1940, the committees dealt with post-war societal problems.

### **The Health Organisation**

Established in Paris in 1908, the International Health Office collected and distributed information from various health departments around the world, though it had no authority to act on its own. In 1922, and in accordance with Article 23 of the Covenant (concerning the prevention and control of disease), the League of Nations' Health Committee and Health Section were established. However, these bodies were not associated with the Paris International Health Office because of disagreements that existed primarily between the United States of America and some Member States.

Under the leadership of Dr. Ludwig Rajchman, Secretary of the newly established Health Committee and Director of the Health Section, a health programme was initiated with the participation of non-member States such as Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United States of America. In addition to its information service, the Health Section acted as a link between national health administrations in many ways. For example, it extended its support to governments through the promotion of technical assistance, and it

advised the Assembly and the Health Council on all international public health questions. For these reasons it is considered one of the most successful auxiliary organisations of the League of Nations. As a result of the 1922 Warsaw Health Conference, plans were set up to control the spread of epidemic diseases in Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean countries, the Far East, and the Soviet Union. Soon after, an Eastern Bureau of Epidemiological Information was established in Singapore, a State Serum Institute was set up in Copenhagen, and a National Institute for Medical Research was installed in London. Through these institutions, several vaccines (for diphtheria, tetanus and tuberculosis for example) were standardised worldwide. After the demise of the League of Nations, the Health Organisation became the World Health Organisation (WHO), based in Geneva.

#### **6.2.4 The End of the League of Nations**

At the end of the war, 43 States were still Members of the League of Nations, though for all intents and purposes it had ceased to exist. However, the formal termination of the organisation was necessary. A final and official disposition had to be taken concerning the transfer of the League of Nations' properties to the United Nations: its concrete assets in the form of its buildings and grounds, its Library, and last but certainly not least, its archives and historical collections. In 1945, the San Francisco Conference set up a Preparatory Commission that met in London with the Supervisory Commission of the League of Nations in order to do this. At the initiative of the British Foreign Office, the last Assembly (the twenty-first) was held in Geneva on 8 April 1946.

In his final speech, Lord Robert Cecil, one of the League of Nations' founders, proclaimed that the efforts of those who had established the League of Nations were not lost, because without them the

new international organisation, the United Nations, could not exist. Lord Cecil closed the Assembly with the words: "The League is dead, long live the United Nations!" The final act of transfer was signed in Geneva on 18 April 1946 by Sean Lester, the last Secretary General of the League of Nations, and Włodzimierz Moderow, the representative of the United Nations. Thus, having handed over all of its assets to the United Nations, and having granted the new Secretariat full control of its Library and archives, the 43 Members attending this last Assembly declared by unanimous vote that as of 20 April 1946, the League of Nations would cease to exist.

#### 6.2.4.1 Reasons for the Failure of the League of Nations

##### 1. Lack of Universal Membership

- ◆ The United States, one of the most powerful nations of the time, never joined the League, despite President Woodrow Wilson being its key proponent.
- ◆ Germany was initially excluded and only joined in 1926 but left in 1933.
- ◆ The Soviet Union joined late (1934) and was expelled in 1939.
- ◆ Many colonial nations and emerging states were not represented, weakening its legitimacy as a truly global organisation.

##### 2. Absence of Strong Military Force

- ◆ The League did not have its own army to enforce decisions.
- ◆ Member states were reluctant to commit troops for collective security.
- ◆ It had to rely on economic

sanctions or moral condemnation, which were ineffective against aggressive nations.

##### 3. Inability to Prevent Aggression

- ◆ **Manchurian Crisis (1931–1933):** Japan invaded Manchuria, and despite League condemnation, Japan withdrew from the League and continued its expansion.
- ◆ **Abyssinian Crisis (1935–1936):** Italy invaded Ethiopia (Abyssinia), and the League failed to impose effective sanctions.
- ◆ **Failure to Check Nazi Germany:** The League did not prevent Germany's remilitarisation of the Rhineland (1936) and subsequent aggressions in Austria and Czechoslovakia.

##### 4. Weak Sanctions Mechanism

- ◆ The League could impose economic sanctions, but these were often ineffective as key countries continued trade with aggressors.
- ◆ Military sanctions were rarely used due to lack of international consensus.
- ◆ Moral condemnation had little impact on aggressive nations.

##### 6. Impact of the Great Depression (1929)

- ◆ The economic crisis led countries to focus on domestic recovery rather than international commitments.
- ◆ Nations adopted protectionist policies, leading to increased nationalism and isolationism.

##### 7. Failure of Disarmament Efforts

- ◆ The League promoted

disarmament, but major powers were unwilling to reduce their military capabilities.

- ◆ The 1932–34 World Disarmament Conference failed as Germany demanded equal military status, leading to its withdrawal from the League.

## 8. Lack of a Unified Leadership

- ◆ Decision-making in the League required unanimity, making it difficult to take swift action.
- ◆ Major powers were often unwilling to enforce League resolutions.

## Recap

- ◆ President Woodrow Wilson outlined 14 principles for world peace in a 1918 address to Congress, aiming to guide post-World War I negotiations
- ◆ Wilson's 14 Points served as the foundation for peace negotiations at the end of World War I, although many of his proposals were ultimately ignored
- ◆ Wilson presented a blueprint for world peace with his 14 Points, emphasizing self-determination, disarmament, and the freedom of the seas
- ◆ Wilson advocated for the abolition of secret treaties, arguing for open diplomacy and transparency in international relations
- ◆ Wilson's 14 Points included the promise of "self-determination" for oppressed minorities, a significant concept in international relations
- ◆ The 14 Points included the proposal for a League of Nations, an international organisation to promote collective security and prevent future wars
- ◆ While many of Wilson's 14 Points were disregarded, they served as the basis for the Treaty of Versailles, which officially ended World War I
- ◆ The League of Nations' main bodies consisted of the Assembly, Council, Permanent Secretariat, and the Permanent Court of International Justice, each with distinct functions and responsibilities
- ◆ Geneva was chosen as the headquarters for the League, influenced by Switzerland's neutrality, and became home to its assemblies, meetings, and administrative operations
- ◆ The Palais des Nations, built in Geneva as the League's headquarters, faced significant costs and was completed in 1936, partially funded by John D. Rockefeller Jr
- ◆ The League of Nations successfully settled over 60 international disputes, with fewer than 10 disputes escalating into war during its first decade

- ◆ In 1920, the League peacefully resolved the Åland Islands dispute by granting autonomy under Finnish rule and ensuring demilitarisation
- ◆ The Memel dispute was settled by the League, with Lithuania conceding the port to Polish sovereignty after an administrative transition
- ◆ The Greco-Bulgarian conflict saw the League prevent war by organising a ceasefire and evacuating occupied territories
- ◆ The Manchurian Crisis demonstrated the League's failure to impose sanctions, as Japan continued its aggression despite its condemnation
- ◆ The Locarno Pact led to Germany's reconciliation with Belgium and France, paving the way for its admission to the League of Nations
- ◆ In 1932, the League's Disarmament Conference failed due to nations prioritising security over arms reduction, despite public demand for disarmament

## Objective Questions

1. When did President Woodrow Wilson propose his 14-point programme?
2. What was the primary aim of Wilson's 14 Points?
3. What was the name of the group that helped Wilson develop his 14 Points?
4. Which point of Wilson's 14 Points was included in the Treaty of Versailles?
5. Why did Wilson's 14 Points fail to fully materialise in the Treaty of Versailles?
6. What was the primary objective of the League of Nations?
7. Which dispute was resolved in 1920 under the League of Nations?
8. Which country was involved in a sovereignty dispute over Vilna in 1922?
9. Which pact, signed in 1925, helped improve relations between Germany and its neighbours?
10. Which international event failed to achieve disarmament in 1932?

## Answers

1. January 8, 1918
2. To guarantee international peace and prevent future wars
3. The Inquiry
4. Creation of a world organization (League of Nations)
5. European leaders were more focused on punishing Germany
6. To settle disputes by peaceful means
7. The Aaland Islands dispute
8. Lithuania and Poland
9. The Locarno Pact
10. The Disarmament Conference

## Assignments

1. Analyse the key principles of President Wilson's Fourteen Points and evaluate their impact on the post-World War I peace negotiations.
2. How did the idea of 14 points evolve into the League of Nations, and what were its limitations, as highlighted by Wilson's experience with the U.S. Senate's rejection?
3. Discuss the main territorial and political issues addressed in the first twelve points of Wilson's speech.
4. Analyse the role of the League of Nations in settling international disputes, using specific case studies such as the Aaland Islands (1920), Vilna (1922), and the Greco-Bulgarian conflict (1925).
5. Discuss the challenges faced by the League of Nations in its efforts to maintain peace and promote disarmament.

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# Bolshevik Revolution 1917

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ get acquainted with Russian Revolution which was a major event in history of the world
- ◆ understand about the main causes which led to the revolution
- ◆ understand its consequences and its impact on the history of world

### Prerequisites

The Russian Revolution took place in 1917, during the final phase of World War I. It removed Russia from the war and brought about the transformation of the Russian Empire into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), replacing Russia's traditional monarchy with the world's first Communist state. The revolution happened in stages through two separate coups, one in February and one in October. The new government, led by Vladimir Lenin, would solidify its power only after three years of civil war, which ended in 1920.

The revolution that Lenin led marked one of the most radical turning points in Russia's 1,300-year history: it affected economics, social structure, culture, international relations, industrial development, and most any other benchmark by which one might measure a revolution. Although the new government would prove to be at least as repressive as the one it replaced, the country's new rulers were drawn largely from the intellectual and working classes rather than from the aristocracy—which meant a considerable change in direction for Russia.

The revolution opened the door for Russia to fully enter the industrial age. Prior to 1917, Russia was a mostly agrarian nation that had dabbled in industrial development only to a limited degree. By 1917, Russia's European neighbors had

embraced industrialisation for more than half a century, making technological advancements such as widespread electrification, which Russia had yet to achieve. After the revolution, new urban-industrial regions appeared quickly in Russia and became increasingly important to the country's development. The population was drawn to the cities in huge numbers. Education also took a major upswing, and illiteracy was almost entirely eradicated.

## Keywords

Tsarist, Revolution, April Theses, Bolsheviks, Lenin, Soviets

## Discussion

### 6.3.1 Discussion

The Bolshevik Revolution was the result of a complex interplay of political, economic, and social factors. The Tsarist regime's failure to address Russia's deep inequalities, the immense hardships caused by World War I, and the rise of radical ideologies like Marxism all contributed to the conditions for revolution. The February Revolution of 1917, which ousted the Tsar, set the stage for the Bolsheviks, under Lenin's leadership, to seize power later that year. The revolution fundamentally transformed Russia and set the stage for the creation of the Soviet Union, marking a key moment in the history of the 20th century.

### 6.3.2 Background Leading to the Bolshevik Revolution

#### 1. The Tsarist Regime and Social Structure

Before the Bolshevik Revolution, Russia was an autocratic monarchy ruled by the Romanov dynasty, with Tsar Nicholas II at its helm. The regime faced deepening dissatisfaction due to political repression, lack of civil rights, and the immense social

divide. The majority of Russians were peasants, living in poverty under oppressive conditions, while the urban working class was similarly exploited with poor wages, long hours, and unsafe working environments. Political opposition was crushed by the Tsarist secret police, and the ideas of socialists and revolutionaries, particularly Marxism, gained traction among intellectuals and workers who sought radical change.

#### 2. Rise of Revolutionary Ideologies

Marxism, as developed by Karl Marx, became increasingly popular in Russia through figures like Vladimir Lenin, who adapted Marx's ideas to Russian conditions. The Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP), founded in 1898, split in 1903 into the Bolsheviks (led by Lenin) and Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks, favoring a centralised, disciplined party to lead the revolution, would eventually become the driving force behind the October Revolution.

#### 3. The 1905 Revolution

The Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) was a key event that exposed the weaknesses of the Tsarist regime. The military defeats and

economic strain led to widespread unrest. The 1905 Revolution, sparked by the massacre of peaceful protestors on Bloody Sunday in January 1905, resulted in strikes, protests, and the formation of soviets (workers' councils) across Russia. Although the revolution failed to overthrow the Tsar, it forced Nicholas II to make some concessions, including the establishment of the Duma (parliament) through the October Manifesto. However, the Tsar retained significant power, and the demands for more democratic reforms were only partially addressed.

#### 4. The Impact of World War I

In 1914, Russia entered World War I, which proved disastrous. The war placed enormous strains on Russia's economy and military, leading to devastating defeats on the Eastern Front. The war exacerbated existing social unrest, causing food shortages, inflation, and widespread dissatisfaction. The military's failures, coupled with the Tsar's personal involvement in war leadership, further weakened his legitimacy. The war also intensified the suffering of the working class and peasantry, laying the groundwork for revolution.

#### 5. The February Revolution of 1917

In early 1917, Russia was on the brink of collapse. Widespread strikes and protests erupted in Petrograd (St. Petersburg) over food shortages, poor working conditions, and the war. On March 8, 1917, workers staged a general strike, and demonstrations turned into an uprising against the Tsarist regime. The military, once loyal to the Tsar, began siding with the revolutionaries. Under immense pressure, Tsar Nicholas II abdicated on March 15, ending the Romanov dynasty. A Provisional Government, led by Alexander Kerensky, was established, but it faced significant challenges, including its decision to continue fighting in the war and its failure to address the demands of

workers, soldiers, and peasants.

#### 6. Dual Power: Provisional Government vs. Soviets

With the Provisional Government struggling to maintain control, power began shifting to the Soviets - representative councils of workers, soldiers, and peasants. The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, capitalized on the widespread dissatisfaction with the Provisional Government's failure to enact meaningful reforms. Lenin's April Theses called for the overthrow of the Provisional Government, demanding "Peace, Land, and Bread," and advocating for a socialist revolution. The Bolsheviks, gaining momentum, became the leading force within the Soviets, especially in key urban centers.

#### 7. The Kornilov Affair and the Bolshevik Rise

In August 1917, General Kornilov, the commander-in-chief of the Russian army, attempted a coup against the Provisional Government, further weakening its authority. The Bolsheviks, having gained support among workers and soldiers, helped to defend Petrograd from Kornilov's forces, positioning themselves as protectors of the revolution. This event significantly increased Bolshevik popularity, as they emerged as the only force capable of defending the revolution and addressing the demands of the masses.

#### 6.3.3 Lenin's Leadership

Revolutionary and intellectual; founded Bolshevik Party; returned to Russia from exile in April 1917 and advocated armed rebellion to establish Communist state During the February Revolution, Vladimir Lenin had been living in exile in Switzerland. Though historians disagree about specifics, they concur that the government of Germany deliberately facilitated Lenin's return to his homeland in the spring of 1917. Without question, the German leadership did so



with the intent of destabilising Russia. The Germans provided Lenin with a guarded train that took him as far as the Baltic coast, from which he travelled by boat to Sweden, then on to Russia by train. There is also evidence that Germany funded the Bolshevik Party, though historians disagree over how much money they actually contributed.

Lenin arrived in Petrograd on the evening of April 3, 1917. His arrival was enthusiastically awaited, and a large crowd greeted him and cheered as he stepped off the train. To their surprise, however, Lenin expressed hostility toward most of them, denouncing both the provisional government and the Petrograd Soviet that had helped to bring about the change of power. Although a limited sense of camaraderie had come about among the various competing parties ever since the February Revolution, Lenin would have nothing to do with this mentality. He considered any who stood outside his own narrow Bolshevik enclave to be his sworn enemies and obstacles to the "natural" flow of history.

### 6.3.3.1 The April Theses

In the days following his arrival, Lenin gave several speeches calling for the overthrow of the provisional government. On April 7, the Bolshevik newspaper "Pravda" published the ideas contained in Lenin's speeches, which collectively came to be known as the April Theses.

From the moment of his return through late October 1917, Lenin worked for a single goal: to place Russia under Bolshevik control as quickly as possible. The immediate effect of Lenin's attitude, however, was to alienate most other prominent Socialists in the city. Members of the Petrograd Soviet, and even many members of Lenin's own party, wrote Lenin off as an anarchist quack who was too radical to be taken seriously.

### "All Power to the Soviets"

In the meantime, Lenin pulled his closest supporters together and moved on toward the next step of his plan. He defined his movement by the slogan "All power to the soviets" as he sought to agitate the masses against the provisional government. In formulating his strategy, Lenin believed that he could orchestrate a new revolution in much the same way that the previous one had happened, by instigating large street demonstrations. Though the soviets were primarily a tool of the Mensheviks and were giving Lenin little support at the moment, he believed he could manipulate them for his own purposes.

From the moment Lenin returned to Russia, he began to work toward seizing power for the Bolsheviks using every means available. The first attempt took place in late April, during a sharp disagreement between the provisional government and the Petrograd Soviet over the best way to get Russia out of World War I. As frustrated military personnel began to demonstrate in the streets, the Bolsheviks attempted to agitate the troops by demanding the ouster of the provisional government. However, no coup grew out of these demonstrations, and they dissipated without incident.

During the spring and summer, the Bolsheviks would make several more attempts to bring about a second revolution by inciting the masses. Their repeated failures made it clear to Lenin that a repeat performance of the February Revolution was not to be and that a much more organised, top-down approach would be required.

### 6.3.3.2 The Bolsheviks and the Military

Lenin recognised that the current Russian leaders' hesitation to pull the country out of

World War I was a weakness that could be exploited. He knew that after four years of massive losses and humiliating defeats, the army was ready to come home and was on the verge of revolting. While other politicians bickered over negotiating smaller war reparations - and even over whether Russia might possibly make territorial gains by staying in the war longer - Lenin demanded that Russia exit the war immediately, even if it meant heavy reparations and a loss of territory. With this position, Lenin received growing support throughout the Russian armed forces, which would ultimately be key to his seizing power. Thus, he launched an aggressive propaganda campaign directed specifically at the Russian troops still serving on the front.

### 6.3.3.3 Lenin's Radicalism

The period following Lenin's return to Russia was a confusing time for Russian Socialists, who previously had held Lenin in high esteem and had believed he would unite them upon his return. Indeed, his radical positions caused greater division than ever among Russia's various political groups. Lenin's refusal to compromise backfired on him, however, and in the autumn he would need the support of these groups in order to secure power.

Eventually, Lenin did backtrack temporarily on his earlier extreme positions, with the aim of garnering more support. In particular, he temporarily embraced the Petrograd Soviet. Although this effort did have some limited success, it failed to produce the level of support that Lenin had hoped for. Therefore, he decided to concentrate instead on defaming the provisional government and also building up connections within the military so that after the revolution, he could deal with all his critics by force.

Throughout the month of June, the First

All-Russia Congress of Soviets was held in Petrograd. Out of 784 delegates who had a full vote, the Bolsheviks numbered 105; though they were a minority, their voice was loud and clear. As the Congress discussed the future of Russia, doubt was expressed as to whether any existing party was actually willing to accept the responsibility of leading the nation. As if on cue, Lenin promptly stood up and announced, "There is such a party!" Laughter was reportedly heard following Lenin's pronouncement, and few took him seriously. To Lenin, however, it was no joke.

On June 9, the Bolsheviks made an open proclamation calling for civilians and soldiers alike to fill the streets of the capital and to condemn the provisional government and demand an immediate end to the war. Though the proclamation called on demonstrators to state their demands "calmly and convincingly, as behooves the strong," the Bolsheviks' true intention, as always, was to sponsor a violent uprising that would topple the government. That evening, the Congress of Soviets, anticipating the potential for violence, prohibited demonstrations for a period of several days. The Bolsheviks gave in and called off the demonstration, realising that they still lacked adequate support to carry off a revolution.

### 6.3.4 Russia's Final War

In June, Minister of War Alexander Kerensky ordered the Russian army to undertake a renewed offensive along the Austrian front in World War I. Prior to the offensive's start, Kerensky personally toured the front and delivered rousing speeches to the troops. Once under way, the Russian troops made brief progress against the Austrians and even captured several thousand prisoners. Within a few days, however, German reinforcements appeared, and the Russian troops fled in a

general panic. The operation was a complete failure and weakened Kerensky politically. Recognising another opportunity, Lenin immediately stepped up his efforts to agitate the Russian masses and eagerly waited for the right moment to stage an armed uprising.

#### 6.3.4.1 The July Putsch

On June 30, the Petrograd Machine Gun Regiment, one of the largest and most politically volatile military regiments in the city, was ordered to report for duty on the front. Members of the regiment immediately began to protest, and the ever-watchful Bolsheviks lost no time in directing the full strength of their propaganda machine at whipping the soldiers' discontent into a frenzy.

On July 3, Bolshevik leaders decided to try to use the regiment, in combination with their own armed forces and 20,000 sailors from a nearby naval base, to take over the Petrograd Soviet. The Bolsheviks called for an extraordinary meeting of the workers' section of the Soviet, and the next day, July 4, an armed mob began to assemble outside the Tauride Palace, where the Petrograd Soviet had its headquarters.

The mob had little organisation, and as rumors circulated that seasoned troops from the front were on the way to Petrograd to put down the demonstrations, fear spread rapidly through the group, and many began to leave. At the same time, the provisional government released documents to the press purporting that the Bolsheviks were treasonously colluding with Germany, which sowed further doubt and confusion among those in the crowd.

By the end of the day, the mob had dissipated, and frontline troops did indeed come into the capital and restore order. Arrest warrants were issued for all of the Bolshevik leaders. Most were caught but were

not prosecuted because of resistance by the Petrograd Soviet. Lenin managed to escape to Finland. Kerensky, for his effectiveness in neutralising the Bolsheviks, was promoted from minister of war to prime minister.

#### 6.3.4.2 A Setback for the Bolsheviks

The events of June and July proved conclusively to Lenin that he could not carry out a revolution simply by manipulating crowds of demonstrators. The July Putsch, as it came to be called, was a disaster for the Bolsheviks on many levels. The failed coup made them appear reckless and incompetent. The accusations of their collusion with Germany further damaged their reputation, especially among the military, and Lenin was unusually ineffective in countering the charges. At the same time, Kerensky and the provisional government received a brief boost in popularity. Worst of all for the Bolsheviks, most of their leadership, including the crucial figure Leon Trotsky, were now in jail, and Lenin was once more in hiding, which made communication and planning difficult.

#### 6.3.4.3 Lavr Kornilov

In July, Prime Minister Kerensky appointed General Lavr Kornilov commander in chief of the Russian army. Kornilov, a popular and highly respected figure in the army, reportedly had little interest in politics but had a strong sense of patriotism. However, Kerensky soon began to fear that Kornilov was plotting to set up a military dictatorship. Kornilov had his own doubts about Kerensky as well, and a mutual lack of trust grew quickly between them. Nevertheless, the two leaders managed to work together in a reasonably professional manner for a time.

#### 6.3.4.4 The Kornilov Affair

This tenuous relationship quickly fell

apart, although it is not clear what exactly transpired. According to one account, Vladimir Lvov, a former member of the Duma and a member of the provisional government, conceived a means to exploit the bad blood between Kerensky and Kornilov. Lvov believed that the only way to save Russia was to install a military dictator and felt that Kornilov fit the bill. Therefore, without telling Kerensky, Lvov paid a visit to Kornilov, presenting himself as Kerensky's representative. In short, Lvov told Kornilov that Kerensky was offering him dictatorial powers in Russia if he would accept them. Next, Lvov visited Kerensky, presenting himself as Kornilov's representative, and informed Kerensky that Kornilov demanded martial law be established in Petrograd and that all ministers, including Kerensky, give full authority to Kornilov.

Because neither Kerensky nor Kornilov knew each other's intentions, the situation deteriorated rapidly. Kerensky, believing that Kornilov was leading a coup aimed at unseating him, panicked and publicly accused Kornilov of treason. Kornilov, in turn, was dumbfounded and infuriated at this accusation, as he was under the impression that he had been invited to take power. In his panic, Kerensky appealed to the Bolsheviks for help against a military putsch, but in the end, no military coup materialised.

Other historians believe that the so-called Kornilov affair involved far less intrigue and merely arose from a series of misunderstandings. Some contend that Kornilov's coup attempt was genuine, while others suspect that Kerensky led Kornilov into a trap. Moreover, although Lvov did indisputably act as a liaison between the two men, it is not entirely clear that he engineered the rift that developed.

In any case, the Kornilov affair weakened Kerensky and provided Lenin with the

opportunity he had been waiting for. The incident had two important effects that hastened the downfall of the provisional government. First, it destroyed Kerensky's credibility in the eyes of the military and made him look foolish and unstable to the rest of the country. Second, it strengthened the Bolsheviks, who used the incident very effectively to boost their own platform. It also gave the Bolsheviks an opportunity to greatly increase their store of weapons when the panicked Kerensky asked them to come to his aid. Altogether, the affair finally set the stage for the Bolsheviks to make a real attempt at revolution that autumn.

### 6.3.4.5 The Red Resurgence

During late August and September, the Bolsheviks enjoyed a sudden growth in strength, following their failures during the summer. On August 31, they finally achieved a majority in the Petrograd Soviet, and on September 5, they won a similar victory in the Moscow Soviet. Lenin, fearing arrest after the events of July, continued to hide in rural areas near the Finnish border. As time went on, he becomes more and more impatient and began calling urgently for the ouster of the provisional government.

Although Prime Minister Alexander Kerensky's authority was faltering, the provisional government was coming closer to organising the Constituent Assembly, which would formally establish a republican government in Russia. Elections for the assembly were scheduled for November 12. Lenin knew that once this process started, it would be far more difficult to seize power while still preserving the appearance of legitimacy. If there were to be another revolution, it had to take place before then.

### 6.3.4.6 Internal Opposition

Before a revolution could happen, Lenin

faced considerable opposition from within his own party. Many still felt that the timing was wrong and that Lenin had made no serious plans for how the country would be administered after power was seized. On October 10, shortly following Lenin's return to Petrograd, the Bolshevik Party leadership (the Central Committee) held a fateful meeting. Few details of this meeting have survived, but it is known that Lenin delivered an impassioned speech in which he restated his reasons for staging the uprising sooner rather than later. Most of those present - only twelve men in all - initially were reluctant. Nevertheless, by the end of the meeting, Lenin had talked all but two of them into approving an armed uprising to oust the provisional government. What had yet to be decided was precisely when the revolution would happen.

#### 6.3.4.7 Final Plans

During the next two weeks, Lenin's followers remained holed up in their headquarters at the Smolny Institute, a former school for girls in the center of Petrograd, where they made their final plans and assembled their forces. A Second Congress of Soviets was now in the works, scheduled for October 25, and the Bolsheviks were confident that they would have its overwhelming support, since they had taken pains to invite only those delegates likely to sympathize with their cause.

Just to be sure, however, the Bolsheviks decided to hold the revolution on the day before the meeting and then to ask the Congress to approve their action after the fact. The two Bolshevik leaders who had voted against the uprising after the October 10 meeting, Lev Kamenev and Grigory Zinoviev, continued to protest the plan and resist Lenin's preparations. However, at the last moment, they suddenly reversed their position so as not to be left out.

By this point, the Bolsheviks had an army of sorts, under the auspices of the Military Revolutionary Committee, technically an organ of the Petrograd Soviet. Lenin and the other Bolshevik leaders, however, knew that these troops were unreliable and had a tendency to flee as soon as anyone fired at them. However, they expected that at least the main Petrograd garrison would support them once they saw that the Bolsheviks had the upper hand.

#### 6.3.4.8 The Provisional Government's Response

Although the details may have been secret, by late October it was well known throughout Petrograd that the Bolsheviks were planning something major. Prime Minister Kerensky and other members of the provisional government discussed the matter endlessly; Kerensky pressed for greater security and for the arrest of every Bolshevik who could be found, especially those in the Military Revolutionary Committee. The other ministers resisted Kerensky's suggestions and believed that everything could ultimately be solved by negotiation.

Nonetheless, the provisional government did make a few modest preparatory arrangements. First, it closed down all Bolshevik newspapers on October 23. Although this move did actually catch the Bolsheviks off guard, it had little practical effect. Then, on the morning of October 24, the day the uprising was to begin, the provisional government installed junkers - cadets from local military academies - to guard government buildings and strategic points around the city. One of these positions was the Tsar's old Winter Palace, which the provisional government now used for its headquarters. Places of business closed early that day, and most people scurried home and stayed off the streets.

### 6.3.5 October 24: The Siege of the Winter Palace

In truth, little happened on October 24, the first day of the Russian Revolution. The main event was that Lenin made his way across town to the Smolny Institute, disguised as a drunk with a toothache. Late that evening, Bolshevik troops made their way to preassigned positions and systematically occupied crucial points in the capital, including the main telephone and telegraph offices, banks, railroad stations, post offices, and most major bridges. Not a single shot was fired, as the junkers assigned to guard these sites either fled or were disarmed without incident. Even the headquarters of the General Staff - the army headquarters - was taken without resistance.

By the morning of October 25, the Winter Palace was the only government building that had not yet been taken. At 9:00 A.M., Kerensky sped out of the city in a car commandeered from the U.S. embassy. The other ministers remained in the palace, hoping that Kerensky would return with loyal soldiers from the front. Meanwhile, Bolshevik forces brought a warship, the cruiser Aurora, up the Neva River and took up a position near the palace. Other Bolshevik forces occupied the Fortress of Peter and Paul on the opposite bank of the river from the palace. By that afternoon, the palace was completely surrounded and defended only by the junker guards inside. The provisional government ministers hid in a small dining room on the second floor, awaiting Kerensky's return.

The Bolsheviks spent the entire afternoon and most of the evening attempting to take control of the Winter Palace and arrest the ministers within it. Although the palace was defended weakly by the junker cadets, most of the Bolshevik soldiers were unwilling to fire on fellow Russians or on the buildings of the Russian capital. Instead, small groups broke

through the palace windows and negotiated with the junkers, eventually convincing many of them to give up. Although some accounts claim that a few shots were fired, little or no violence ensued. The ministers were finally arrested shortly after 2:00 A.M. on October 26 and escorted to prison cells in the Peter and Paul Fortress. Kerensky never returned and eventually escaped abroad, living out his life first in continental Europe and then as a history professor in the United States.

#### 6.3.5.1 The Second Congress of Soviets

Although Lenin had hoped that the revolution would be over in time to make a spectacular announcement at the start of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets in the late afternoon of October 25, events transpired differently. The Congress delegates were forced to wait for several hours as Bolshevik forces tried to remove the provisional government from the Winter Palace. Lenin became increasingly agitated and embarrassed by the delay. Late in the evening, the Congress was declared open, even though the Winter Palace had still not been taken. Furthermore, despite the Bolshevik leaders' efforts, dedicated Bolsheviks constituted only about half of the 650 delegates at the Congress. Lively debate and disagreement took place both about the Bolshevik-led coup and also about who should now lead Russia. The meeting lasted the rest of the night, adjourning after 5:00 A.M. on October 26.

The Congress resumed once more late the next evening, and several important decisions were made during this session. The first motion approved was Lenin's Decree on Peace, which declared Russia's wish for World War I to end but did not go so far as to declare a cease-fire. The next matter to be passed was the Decree on Land, which officially socialised all land in the country for

redistribution to peasant communes. Finally, a new provisional government was formed to replace the old one until the Constituent Assembly met in November as scheduled. The new government was called the Soviet of the People's Commissars (SPC). Lenin was its chairman, and all of its members were Bolsheviks. As defined by the Congress, the SPC had to answer to a newly elected Executive Committee, chaired by Lev Kamenev, which in turn would answer to the Constituent Assembly.

### 6.3.6 Life After the Revolution

Life in Russia after October 25, 1917, changed very little at first. There was no widespread panic among the upper classes, and the people of Petrograd were generally indifferent. Few expected the new government to last for long, and few understood what it would mean if it did. In Moscow, there was a power struggle that lasted for nearly a week. In other regions, local politicians (of various party loyalties) simply took power for themselves. In the countryside, anarchy ruled for a time, and peasants boldly seized land as they pleased, with little interference from anyone. The new Bolshevik-led government, meanwhile, improvised policy quite literally on the fly, with no long-term plan or structure in place other than vague intentions.

#### 6.3.6.1 Assessing the October Revolution

Although the Soviet government went to great lengths for decades to make the “Great October Socialist Revolution” appear colourful and heroic, it was in many ways a mundane and anticlimactic event. The provisional government barely tried to resist, and afterward, few Russians seemed to care about or even notice the change in governments. However, this very indifference on the part of the Russian people enabled

the new leadership to extend its power quite far, and the October Revolution would soon prove to be a cataclysmic event once its earthshaking effect on Russia and the rest of the world became clear. However bloodless the Russian Revolution initially may have been, it would ultimately cost tens of millions of Russian lives and shock the nation so deeply that it has not yet come to terms with what happened.

As far as historians have been able to determine, Lenin and most of the other major revolutionary figures at his side believed sincerely in their cause and were not motivated purely by a thirst for power. In all likelihood, they seized power believing that they were doing so for the greater good. Ironically, their faith in the socioeconomic models of Marx was on the level of an extreme religious devotion—the very same blind devotion that they often denounced in others. Unfortunately, this steadfast belief in Marxism would come to be implemented through brutal and repressive means.

#### 6.3.6.2 An End to the War

After Lenin's government secured power, one of its first major goals was to get Russia out of World War I. Following his Decree on Peace, Lenin sent out diplomatic notes to all participants in the war, calling for everyone to cease hostilities immediately if they did not want Russia to seek a separate peace. The effort was ignored. Therefore, in November 1917, the new government ordered Russian troops to cease all hostilities on the front. On December 15, Russia signed an armistice with Germany and Austria, pending a formal peace treaty (the treaty was not completed until March 1918).

#### 6.3.6.3 The Third Congress of Soviets

The assembly was replaced by the Third

Congress of Soviets, 94 percent of whose members were required to be Bolshevik and SR delegates. The new group quickly ratified a motion that the term “provisional” be removed from the official description of the SPC, making Lenin and the Bolsheviks the permanent rulers of the country.

Until this point, the Bolsheviks had often used word democracy in a positive sense, but this changed almost instantly. The Bolsheviks began to categorise their critics as counterrevolutionaries and treated them as traitors. The terms revolutionary dictatorship and dictatorship of the proletariat began to pop up frequently in Lenin’s speeches, which began to characterise democracy as an illusionary concept propagated by Western capitalists.

### 6.3.7 The Bolsheviks’ Consolidation of Power

In March 1918, even as Lenin’s representatives were signing the final treaty taking Russia out of World War I, the Bolsheviks were in the process of moving their seat of power from Petrograd to Moscow. This largely symbolic step was a part of the Bolshevik effort to consolidate power.

Although symbolism of this sort was a major part of the Bolsheviks’ strategy, they knew they also needed military power to force the rest of the country to comply with their vision while discouraging potential foreign invaders from interfering. Therefore, they rebuilt their military force, which now largely consisted of 35,000 Latvian riflemen who had sided with the Bolsheviks when they vowed to remove Russia from World War I. The Latvian soldiers were better trained and more disciplined than the Russian forces upon which the Bolshevik forces had previously relied. These troops effectively suppressed insurrections throughout Russia during the course of 1918 and formed the early core

of the newly established Red Army.

The other major instrument of Bolshevik power was the secret police, known by the Russian acronym Cheka (for Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counterrevolution and Sabotage). Officially formed on December 20, 1917, the Cheka was charged with enforcing compliance with Bolshevik rule. At its command, Lenin placed a Polish revolutionary named Felix Dzerzhinsky, who would soon become notorious for the deadly work of his organization. Tens of thousands of people would be murdered at Dzerzhinsky’s behest during the coming years.

#### 6.3.7.1 The Roots of Civil War

Although the Russian Civil War is a separate topic and not dealt with directly in this text, some introduction is appropriate because the war evolved directly from the circumstances of the Russian Revolution. No specific date can be set forth for the beginning of the war, but it generally began during the summer of 1918. As the Bolsheviks (often termed the Reds) were consolidating power, Lenin’s opponents were also organizing from multiple directions. Groups opposing the Bolsheviks ranged from monarchists to democrats to militant Cossacks to moderate socialists. These highly divergent groups gradually united and came to fight together as the Whites. A smaller group, known as the Greens, was made up of anarchists and opposed both the Whites and the Reds.

In the meantime, a contingent of about half a million Czech and Slovak soldiers, taken prisoner by the Russian army during World War I, began to rebel against the Bolsheviks, who were attempting to force them to serve in the Red Army. The soldiers seized a portion of the Trans-Siberian Railway and attempted to make their way across Siberia to Russia’s Pacific coast in order to escape Russia by boat. In the course of their rebellion, they

temporarily joined with White forces in the central Volga region, presenting the fledgling Red Army with a major military challenge. In response to these growing threats, the Bolsheviks instituted military conscription in May 1918 in order to bolster their forces.

### 6.3.7.2 The Red Terror

At the end of the summer, on August 30, there was an assassination attempt on Lenin. He survived, but a brutal crackdown on all forms of opposition commenced shortly thereafter. The Bolsheviks called it the Red Terror, and it fully lived up to its name. This was the atmosphere under which the Russian Civil War began. It lasted well into 1920–1921, by which point the Bolsheviks had fully crushed the rebellion.

### 6.3.7.3 Assessing Bolshevik Russia

After the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks had very little planning in place, and their rule got off to a rough start when they came in behind the SRs in the elections

of the Constituent Assembly. The working class was still a minority in Russia; the Bolsheviks would change that in time, but at the outset their rule could be maintained only by force.

The Bolsheviks faced major opposition from within Russia and for many different reasons. Among the most contentious issues was Russia's costly exit from World War I. Though many had wanted out of the war, they did not approve of Lenin's readiness to lose vast amounts of territory. In addition, the Bolsheviks' sudden dismissal of the Constituent Assembly and their silencing of all other political voices was offensive to many as well. The result was the Russian civil war, which would be horrifically painful for the country and that, in the end, would cost even more lives than had World War I. In 1923 Lenin died and Stalin took over the Communist Party and country. The years following, with the violence of Joseph Stalin's purges and forced collectivisation of Russia's lands, would not be much better. Communist party continued to rule Russia until 1991 when the USSR was dissolved.

## Recap

- ◆ Before the Bolshevik Revolution, Russia was ruled by Tsar Nicholas II under an autocratic monarchy, facing deep political repression and a widening social divide
- ◆ The majority of Russians, mostly peasants and urban workers, lived in poverty and were exploited through poor wages, unsafe working conditions, and political oppression
- ◆ Marxism gained popularity in Russia, with figures like Lenin adapting it to local conditions, leading to the formation of the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions
- ◆ The 1905 Revolution, sparked by the Russo-Japanese War, led to widespread unrest and forced Tsar Nicholas II to establish the Duma, though reforms were limited

- ◆ World War I exacerbated Russia's problems, leading to military defeats, economic strain, and widespread dissatisfaction, which weakened the Tsar's legitimacy
- ◆ In 1917, strikes and protests in Petrograd led to Tsar Nicholas II's abdication, ending the Romanov dynasty and establishing a Provisional Government under Kerensky
- ◆ As the Provisional Government struggled, the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, gained support through their promise of "Peace, Land, and Bread" and began challenging the government
- ◆ The Kornilov Affair of August 1917, in which General Kornilov attempted a coup, bolstered Bolshevik support by positioning them as protectors of the revolution
- ◆ Lenin's return to Russia in April 1917 marked a radical shift, as he demanded an immediate end to the war and promoted Bolshevik control of the revolution
- ◆ The July Putsch in 1917 was a failure for the Bolsheviks, leading to Lenin's temporary retreat to Finland and the loss of momentum for their revolution
- ◆ In late August and September, the Bolsheviks gained momentum, winning majorities in the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets, as Lenin urged a revolution before elections in November
- ◆ Lenin faced opposition within the Bolshevik Party, with some leaders skeptical of an uprising, but by October 10, most were convinced to back an armed revolution
- ◆ Lenin's followers spent two weeks planning the revolution from the Smolny Institute, preparing for a Bolshevik-led uprising, aiming for the support of the Second Congress of Soviets
- ◆ Despite initial resistance, the Bolshevik forces gained control of key points in Petrograd on October 24 without significant violence, although the Winter Palace remained a stronghold
- ◆ On October 25, the Winter Palace was surrounded by Bolshevik forces, and after some negotiations, the provisional government ministers were arrested without major violence
- ◆ The Second Congress of Soviets began late on October 25, passing crucial decrees, including Lenin's Decree on Peace and Land, and forming a new Bolshevik-led government
- ◆ Life after the revolution remained relatively unchanged at first, with some power struggles in Moscow, local politicians taking charge, and peasants seizing land, while the Bolshevik government lacked clear plans

## Objective Questions

1. During which international war did the Russian Revolution take place?
2. What slogan did Lenin use following his arrival in Russia in April 1917?
3. What was the set of ideas that Lenin expressed in the newspaper Pravda following his return to Russia?
4. What was the official name of Lenin's new government?
5. Who became the Russian foreign minister under Lenin?
6. The Red Terror was a response to which event?
7. In March 1918, the Russian capital was moved to
8. In which year the USSR finally collapsed?

## Answers

1. World War I
2. All power to the Soviets!
3. The April Theses
4. The Soviet of the People's Commissars
5. Trotsky
6. An assassination attempts on Lenin
7. Moscow
8. 1991

## Assignments

1. Analyse the role of the Kornilov Affair in weakening the authority of the Provisional Government and how it benefited the Bolsheviks in their rise to power.
2. Discuss the internal opposition Lenin faced within the Bolshevik Party before the October Revolution. How did Lenin manage to secure the support of the Central Committee for an armed uprising?
3. Evaluate the significance of the Siege of the Winter Palace during the October Revolution. How did the Bolshevik forces manage to take control of key sites in Petrograd with minimal violence?
4. Assess the immediate political and social consequences of the October Revolution.
5. Critically examine Lenin's Decree on Peace and its impact on Russia's exit from World War I.

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# Turkey under Mustapha Kamal Pasha

## UNIT

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand the personality and statesmanship of Ataturk
- ◆ analyse the development of Turkey under Kamal Pasha into a modern state
- ◆ understand the revolutionary reforms introduced by Ataturk

### Prerequisites

Kemal Atatürk was the founder and first president of the Republic of Turkey, having galvanized the Turkish people after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I. He implemented an ambitious program of modernisation and broadly transformed the legal and social systems of Turkish life.

Kemal Atatürk became a national hero after turning back the Allies at Gallipoli during World War I. Still, the Ottomans were defeated. To prevent partition of Anatolia, he led a rebellion against the sultanate. In 1923 the sovereignty of the Turkish Republic was internationally recognized with the Treaty of Lausanne. Atatürk became its first president.

In 1921, Atatürk established a provisional government in Ankara. The following year the Ottoman Sultanate was formally abolished and, in 1923, Turkey became a secular republic with Atatürk as its president. He established a single party regime that lasted almost without interruption until 1945.

He launched a programme of revolutionary social and political reform to modernise Turkey. These reforms included the emancipation of women, the abolition of all Islamic institutions and the introduction of Western legal codes, dress, calendar and alphabet, replacing the Arabic script with a Latin one. Abroad he pursued a policy of neutrality, establishing friendly relations with Turkey's neighbours.

## Keywords

Kamal, Sultanate, Caliphate, Reforms, Sharia, Ulama, Turkish Constitution, Moderisation

## Discussion



Fig 6.4.1 Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

### 6.4.1 Early Political Career

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was born in 1881 in Salonika (now Thessaloniki) in what was then the Ottoman Empire. His father was a minor official and later a timber merchant. When Atatürk was 12, he was sent to military school and then to the military academy in Istanbul, graduating in 1905. In 1911, he fought against the Italians in Libya and then in the Balkan Wars (1912 - 1913). He made his military reputation repelling the Allied invasion at the Dardanelles in 1915. His opportunity to be one of the nationalist leaders arose when at the end of the First World War, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire appointed him as Inspector - General based on Samsun, Anatolia. He was responsible to disband what remained of the Ottoman

forces. Instead of disbanding the army he also created the nationalist political institutions when he gathered supporters for the war of liberation. His aim was to declare a Turkish state free from foreign control. On 15 May 1917, a Greek army landed at Izmir and occupied the surrounding areas. In fact Mustafa Kemal himself was not satisfied with the Ottoman government's policy to offer no resistance to the Greeks and other allied violations of the armistice terms. It was clear to him that the present Ottoman government seemed to oppose any nationalist ideologies that might threaten them. His combination with several resistance groups to defend the Turkish state against invasion was successful when the Greeks were defeated. Mustafa Kemal became a national hero in the war against the Greeks. He was given an honorific title Ghazi or 'Defender of the faith'.

### 6.4.2 Political Reforms and Nation-Building

Mustafa Kemal's will and his struggles for the liberation of Turkey were almost successful after defeating the Greeks in 1922 and maintain peace with the Europe at Lausanne in the same year. His achievements in both events brought the recognition of the Istanbul government to the Kemalist groups and their political principles. His next stage was the transformation of the political instrument into a real political party. This came into reality after the formation of a new party called the People's Party.

The People's Party was very influential to the Turkish people and those who were in sympathy with the movement. During the National Election in 1923, the People's Party took over full power. This was considered as the most successful achievement of Kemal's political career. On 29 October 1923, Turkey was proclaimed a Republic with Mustafa Kemal as President. The emergence of the Kemalist Republic marked the beginning of a new ideological orientation that was 'Modern Secular Turkey'. As President, Kemal's aims were to secure independence, peace and modernisation of the Turkish Republic. The modernisation of Turkey however could not be achieved as long as the constitutional monarchy was in existence. Hence, his first reform was the abolition of the Sultanate and then followed shortly by the abolition of the caliphate in 1924

#### **6.4.2.1 Abolition of the Sultanate (1922)**

The Sultanate, the monarchical institution headed by the sultan, had been the central authority of the Ottoman Empire. However, by the early 20th century, its power was significantly diminished. The Young Turks' revolution in 1908 had reduced the sultan's political power, and by the end of World War I, the sultans were largely ceremonial figures. The defeat in World War I, the loss of much of the empire's territory, and the occupation of Istanbul by the Allied powers in 1918 weakened the Ottoman government, leaving the sultan powerless.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his nationalist movement, based in Ankara, rejected the authority of the Sultan and pursued an independent republic free from foreign influence. As part of his efforts to consolidate power, Atatürk aimed to abolish the Ottoman monarchy, which was viewed as an outdated and foreign-imposed institution. The abolition of the Sultanate was a necessary step for the

establishment of the Republic of Turkey and the consolidation of Kemalism.

The process began with the establishment of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey in 1920, which was a legislative body representing the Turkish nationalist movement. On November 1, 1922, the Grand National Assembly voted to formally abolish the Sultanate, which marked the end of over 600 years of Ottoman rule. Sultan Mehmed VI, the last Ottoman ruler, was deposed, and he was forced to leave Istanbul in exile. This marked the official end of the Ottoman monarchy and was a key moment in the formation of a new Turkish republic.

Atatürk's decision to abolish the Sultanate was grounded in his vision of republicanism. The Sultanate represented an old order based on divine-right monarchy and imperial rule, whereas Atatürk's new republic would be based on popular sovereignty and democratic principles. The abolition of the Sultanate was not only an act of political reform but also a rejection of the Ottoman imperial past, which was seen as a symbol of decay and stagnation.

#### **6.4.2.2 Abolition of the Caliphate (1924)**

While the abolition of the Sultanate in 1922 marked the end of the Ottoman Empire's monarchical system, the institution of the Caliphate remained a significant element of Islamic political authority. The Caliph, as the religious leader of the Muslim world, was traditionally seen as the successor to the Prophet Muhammad. In the Ottoman Empire, the sultan was also the caliph, combining both secular and religious authority.

However, the Caliphate had already been undermined by Atatürk's reforms and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The Treaty of Sèvres had reduced the power of the caliphate, and the nationalist movement led

by Atatürk increasingly viewed the institution as incompatible with the new, secular, and nationalist state they were creating.

The final blow to the Caliphate came in March 1924. Atatürk, in line with his secularisation reforms, moved to abolish the Caliphate as part of his broader efforts to separate religion from politics. On March 3, 1924, the Grand National Assembly passed a law officially abolishing the Caliphate, marking the end of over 1,300 years of Islamic caliphal authority.

Atatürk justified the abolition of the Caliphate by arguing that it was a remnant of the past and an obstacle to the development of a modern, secular Turkish state. The Caliphate had long been a political tool used to consolidate power, but it was no longer viable in a world that was increasingly focused on secularism and nationalism. The abolition of the Caliphate removed the last vestige of the Ottoman imperial system and reinforced Atatürk's commitment to secularism.

#### **6.4.2.3 The Impact of the Abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate**

The decision to abolish the Caliphate was controversial at the time, particularly among conservative and religious segments of Turkish society. Some saw the Caliphate as a symbol of Islamic unity, and its abolition was seen as a rejection of Islam's political role. However, Atatürk's reforms were aimed at creating a new national identity based on citizenship, rather than religion. The abolition of the Caliphate was a crucial part of Atatürk's vision for Turkey, where secularism, modernity, and nationalism would replace the Ottoman Empire's religiously-based system.

The abolition of these two posts came as a shock to the Muslim world since they were

the symbol of unity among the Muslims all over the world. In order to make sure that no opposition towards his actions, Kemal later declared it a capital offense to criticize whatever he did. In fact, the abolition of the Sultanate and the caliphate, was a crucial step in secularisation. This radical change aimed to provide the sovereignty to the Turkish nations. From Kemal's view point, the abolition of these two posts would open the new era for the administrative structure of Turkey. The Ottoman political authority must be changed for the betterment of the Turkish nations.

The recent decades had seen the weakness of the Ottoman government when they were easily monopolised by the West in terms of the economic and political structure of the government. The Ottoman caliphs also seemed to be seen as the symbol of obedience of all Muslims rather than playing their role as great Muslim leaders respected by other nations. Therefore it was the time, this corrupted government be replaced with the new government and administration who would protect all Muslims and fulfill their role in accordance with the needs of modern Turkish nations. In order to convince the people on the need of this reform, Kemal stated that the Prophet himself never mentioned to all Muslims about the need for caliphate.

The Prophet only instructed his disciple to convert the nations of the world to Islam. Therefore, it was permissible for all Muslims to choose any type of government they like as long as the such government was able to play its role and administer all Muslim nations. It should be noted that, the abolition of the caliphate by Kemal's groups got supports from some Muslim scholars. Abu'l-Kalam Azad, a well-known 'ulama' from India, was in agreement with Kemal's reforms. To him, the spiritual leadership is the due of God and all Prophets and not for the

caliphate. Another Muslim scholar such as Iqbal, also approved of the abolition of the Caliphate since the post had no longer played its role for the betterment of all Muslims. The moral supports from these two scholars were more than enough for Kemal to continue the reform. It was believed that the abolition of the Sultanate and the Caliphate, had enabled Kemal to proceed to another reforms since there was no more Muslim authority who would hinder him from continuing his secular reforms in fact, Kemal's secular reforms had been planned so well and very cunningly. It began from the heads of state to the lower ranks that involved all the people of Turkey.

#### 6.4.2.4 Social and Cultural Reforms

It was clear that, Kemal's reform, based on the Western ideology; 'the national sovereignty and the eliminating of the Islamic authority' became the direct attack on the traditional Islamic leadership. The abolition of the Sultanate and the Caliphate was later accompanied by other series of reforms.

- ◆ In 1923, the institutions of 'ulama' called Sheikh-al-Islam and the ministry of the Shari'a were abolished. Their numbers also declined.
- ◆ In 1924, another series of reforms began, leading to the closing of religious school and colleges. Kemal saw the existence of these schools or 'medresa' would prevent the Turkish people from having contacts and association with the West.
- ◆ In 1925, the Sufi orders were suppressed in the country when one of its leaders, Sheikh Said was sentenced to death. It should be noted that the suppression of the sufi orders by the Kemalist regime, had been seen by a
- ◆ This was one of the factors contributed to the success of Kemal's reforms in eliminating the Islamic leadership in Turkish society. As the result of the suppression, there was no more public activities of the tariqah orders. Many khanagahs which at once, became centre for Sufis teachings, were turned into museums.
- ◆ In 1926, the Islamic Law (Sharia') was replaced by the Swiss Civil code of Law. This law forbade polygamy and gave wives authority to seek divorce. The adaptation of the Western style of Law into the Turkish Republic seemed to give no room for the Islamic Personal Law concerning marriage, divorce and inheritance.
- ◆ In 1928 there was another amendment in the Turkish Constitution that removed the article which stated Islam as the official religion of the state. By introducing the Western Law, the Kemalist regime tried as much as they could, to expose the people with the Western civilization regarding the legal and large-scale institutional structures.
- ◆ In 1928, the regime had introduced a Latin-based alphabet to replace the Arabic letters.
- ◆ In 1933, the Arabic call to prayer

great part of the population as something acceptable and not against Sufism. Most of the people saw the suppression aimed to combat against the corrupt pretenders of Sufism who made such public display of their piety. Moreover, Kemal's reforms from their eyes, aimed to purify Islam from un-Islamic practices.

had also been substituted with the Turkish language. A further step to get rid the influence of Arabic language in the Quran was taken when there was a project to translate the Quran into Turkish language. In 1932 the translation of the Quran in Turkish language had been read publicly. Those reforms in many respects, aimed to decrease the influence of Arabic and Islamic civilization within the Turkish society. They gave a big impact for Turkish society in general and their new generations in particular.

- ◆ In 1925 the Islamic time and calendar systems was replaced by European ones. As a result of this, Sunday was recognised as a legal holiday for Turkey.
- ◆ In 1926 another law was enacted by which making legal the consumption of alcohol by Muslims made legal. This was followed by the emancipation of woman in 1925-1935. This was considered as a drastic change for the women's status when it protected the freedom of women in the society. They began to have equal right with men regarding divorce, ownership of property, custody of children, etc.
- ◆ Women also began to have equal legal treatment. Another critical attack to the Islamic culture was the banning of religious dress. It was forbidden to wear religious dress outside places of worship. In fact the law concerning the dress code was enacted since there was the misuse of the religious dress for the purpose of achieving authority over the ignorant people.

◆ This cultural modernisation imposed by the Kemalist regime reached its conclusion with the adoption of Western surname in 1934. Mustafa Kemal chose for himself 'Ataturk' that means 'the father of the Turk'. Through the cultural reformation, Kemal hoped that Islam and its heritage would be destroyed and thus Turkey was thoroughly modernised socially and culturally.

#### 6.4.3 Legacy of Kemal Ataturk

Turkey was regarded as the first Muslims country that declared itself as a secular state. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk who is called as the father of the nation was responsible for the establishment of modern Turkey. His revolutions and reforms have brought Turkey into a new phase of development. In doing so, he amended the constitution of his country besides abolishing position of the Sultanate and the caliphate that was ever since began regarded as a symbol of unity among Muslims all over the world. Despite many cultural barriers, his revolutions and reforms have brought Turkey into a new era of modernisation even though he consciously realised that such reforms will destroy every vestige of Islam in the life of the Turkish nation. The consequences of Ataturk's reforms are still being felt today throughout the Muslim world, and especially in a very polarised and ideologically segmented Turkey.

In 1935, when surnames were introduced in Turkey, he was given the name Ataturk, meaning 'Father of the Turks'. He died on 10 November 1938.

Aside from being the founder of modern Turkey, Kemal Ataturk laid the groundwork for Turkey's state ideology, known as Kemalism. Its principles are republicanism, nationalism, populism,

statism (state-controlled economic development), secularism, and revolution (continual change in state and society), which were enshrined in the Turkish constitution in 1937

## Recap

- ◆ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, born in 1881 in Salonika, rose from a military background to lead Turkey's national independence movement after WWI
- ◆ Atatürk became a national hero after defeating the Greeks in 1922 and helped establish the People's Party, which took power in 1923
- ◆ On October 29, 1923, Turkey was declared a Republic with Atatürk as its first President, marking the beginning of a modern, secular state
- ◆ Atatürk's first major reform was the abolition of the Sultanate in 1922, removing the Ottoman monarchy and rejecting its imperial past
- ◆ In 1924, Atatürk abolished the Caliphate, separating religious authority from politics and cementing Turkey's secular, nationalist orientation
- ◆ The abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate was part of Atatürk's vision for a modern Turkish state based on popular sovereignty and secularism
- ◆ Atatürk faced opposition from conservative groups but justified these reforms as necessary for Turkey's modernisation and independence from past influences
- ◆ Kemal Atatürk's reforms directly challenged Islamic authority by abolishing the Sultanate and Caliphate, aiming to establish a secular, Western-style state
- ◆ In 1923, institutions like Sheikh-al-Islam and the Ministry of Shari'a were abolished, marking the decline of the traditional Islamic leadership in Turkey
- ◆ Religious schools and colleges (medresas) were closed in 1924, as Kemal believed they hindered Turkey's integration with Western civilisation
- ◆ In 1925, Sufi orders were suppressed, with widespread public approval, as they were seen as corrupting Islamic teachings rather than preserving them
- ◆ The 1926 legal reforms replaced Islamic law with the Swiss Civil Code, banning polygamy and granting women rights in marriage, divorce, and inheritance
- ◆ The 1928 constitutional amendment removed Islam as Turkey's official religion, reinforcing Atatürk's goal of complete secularisation
- ◆ Major linguistic reforms included replacing the Arabic alphabet with a Latin-based script in 1928 and translating the Quran into Turkish in 1932

- ◆ Cultural modernisation included adopting European time and calendar systems in 1925 and legalizing alcohol consumption in 1926
- ◆ The 1934 surname law culminated cultural reformation, with Mustafa Kemal adopting the name “Atatürk,” meaning “Father of the Turks”
- ◆ Atatürk’s reforms established modern Turkey as a secular state, leaving a lasting impact on Turkish society and influencing debates on secularism in the Muslim world

## Objective Questions

1. What year did Mustafa Kemal Atatürk abolish the Sultanate?
2. Who was the last Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, deposed when the Sultanate was abolished?
3. What major political institution did Atatürk abolish in 1924?
4. What was the primary reason Atatürk for abolishing the Sultanate and Caliphate?
5. In which year did the Grand National Assembly of Turkey formally abolish the Caliphate?
6. In which year was the institution of ‘ulama’ called Sheikh-al-Islam and the Ministry of the Shari’a abolished?
7. When was the Arabic call to prayer substituted with the Turkish language?
8. Which reform was introduced in 1934 as part of Turkey’s cultural modernisation?
9. What was the core ideology established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and enshrined in the Turkish Constitution in 1937?
10. Which legal code replaced Islamic law (*Sharia*) in Turkey in 1926?

## Answers

1. 1922
2. Sultan Mehmed VI
3. The Caliphate
4. To create a modern, secular, and nationalist Turkish state
5. 1924
6. 1923
7. 1933
8. Adoption of Western surnames
9. Kemalism
10. Swiss Civil Code

## Assignments

1. Assess the impact of the abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate in Turkish empire
2. Critically examine the role of cultural modernisation in Atatürk's vision of a secular Turkish state.
3. Explain the six principles of Kemalism and their role in shaping modern Turkey.
4. Analyse the role of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the formation of modern Turkey
5. Evaluate the impact of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's political reforms on Turkish Society

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# UNIT

## Second World War

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ analyse the main ideologies of fascism
- ◆ understand the background of the emergence of Nazism
- ◆ understand the personality and ideology of Adolf Hitler
- ◆ learn the main functions of UNO

### Prerequisites

The rise of fascism in Europe was symbolised by Benito Mussolini's adoption of the *fasces*, an ancient Roman emblem. Mussolini used the fasces both to recall the grandeur of the Roman Empire and to strengthen his authority as Italy's eventual dictator. The fascist regimes in Europe, particularly Mussolini's Italy, sought to unite their citizens in a manner as tightly bound as the fasces. While initially a symbol of power and authority across various nations like the United States and Republic of France in the 18th and 19th centuries - countries that also looked to Rome for inspiration - the fasces became almost exclusively associated with fascism by the mid-20th century.

The rise of Nazism in Germany, led by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party, marked another significant shift in European politics. Rooted in the traditions of Prussian militarism and German Romanticism, Nazism celebrated a mythic German past while advocating for the rights of exceptional individuals over established rules and laws. Hitler's vision of a racially superior German state rejected liberalism, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights, emphasising the subordination of the individual to the state and strict obedience to leadership. The Nazis promoted inequality, particularly based on race, and endorsed the idea of the strong ruling

over the weak. This ideology was politically expressed through rearmament, the reunification of German-speaking territories, expansion into non-German areas, and the purging of “undesirables,” especially Jews.

The aftermath of World War I, often referred to as “the war to end all wars,” did not provide a lasting resolution to global conflicts. In fact, many historians argue that the unresolved issues following the war contributed directly to the outbreak of World War II. Key factors in the causes of WWII include the punitive terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the global economic depression, the failure of appeasement, the rise of militarism in Germany and Japan, and the ineffectiveness of the League of Nations.

In response to the devastation of WWII, the United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 to foster international peace and security. The UN aimed to promote friendly relations among nations on equal terms and to encourage cooperation in addressing global challenges. Its work was recognised globally, with several of its agencies receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. The term “United Nations” originally referred to the countries that opposed the Axis powers. The creation of the UN was discussed during the Yalta Conference in February 1945, and its charter was finalised two months later at the UN Conference on International Organisation.

## Keywords

Fascism, Mussolini, Hitler, Second World War, UNO, Weimar Republic, Nazism, League of Nations, Treaty of Versailles

## Discussion

### 6.5.1 Understanding Fascism

Fascism was a political ideology and mass movement that dominated many parts of central, southern, and eastern Europe between 1919 and 1945 and that also had adherents in western Europe, the United States, South Africa, Japan, Latin America, and the Middle East. Europe's first fascist leader, Benito Mussolini, took the name of his party from the Latin word *fasces*, which referred to a bundle of elm or birch rods (usually containing an ax) used as a symbol of penal authority in ancient Rome. Although fascist parties and movements differed significantly from one another, they had many characteristics in

common, including extreme militaristic nationalism, contempt for electoral democracy and political and cultural liberalism, a belief in natural social hierarchy and the rule of elites, and the desire to create “people’s community”, in which individual interests would be subordinated to the good of the nation.

Fascist parties and movements came to power in several countries between 1922 and 1945: the National Fascist Party in Italy, led by Mussolini; the National Socialist German Workers’ Party or Nazi Party, led by Adolf Hitler and representing his National Socialism movement; the

Fatherland Front in Austria, led by Engelbert Dollfuss; the National Union in Portugal, led by António de Oliveira Salazar (which became fascist after 1936); the Party of Free Believers in Greece, led by Ioannis Metaxas; the Ustaša ("Insurgence") in Croatia, led by Ante Pavelić; the National Union in Norway, which was in power for only a week - though its leader, Vidkun Quisling, was later made minister president under the German occupation; and the military dictatorship of Admiral Tojo Hideki in Japan.

## 6.5.2 The Main Principles of Fascism

### 1. Authoritarianism

Fascist regimes operate under a single, all-powerful leader or a dominant ruling party. Political opposition is eliminated through censorship, propaganda, and violent repression. Mussolini's famous phrase "Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state." Encapsulates the absolute control fascism demands.

### 2. Extreme Nationalism

Fascist ideologies promote the belief that their nation is superior to others. This intense nationalism often results in aggressive expansionist policies. Mussolini aimed to restore Italy's former glory by reviving the Roman Empire, while Hitler pursued the concept of *Lebensraum* (living space) to expand Germany's territory.

### 3. Militarism

Fascist governments prioritize military strength and expansion, often glorifying war as a means of achieving national goals. Italy under Mussolini aggressively pursued military campaigns in Africa, particularly in Ethiopia (1935–1936).

### 4. Suppression of Opposition

Totalitarian control is enforced through strict censorship, surveillance, and persecution of political opponents. The OVRA, Mussolini's secret police, was instrumental in suppressing dissent. Political adversaries were imprisoned, exiled, or executed.

### 5. State-Controlled Economy

Fascist economies are neither fully capitalist nor socialist but follow a corporatist model, where the government regulates industries and collaborates with business elites while suppressing labor unions. Italy's economy under Mussolini was structured into syndicates representing workers and employers, functioning under state supervision.

### 6. Propaganda and Cult of Personality

Fascist leaders use mass propaganda to shape public opinion, glorify their rule, and instill loyalty. Mussolini, often called *Il Duce* ("The Leader"), used films, newspapers, and radio broadcasts to project an image of strength and invincibility.

### 7. Opposition to Democracy and Liberalism

Fascists view democracy as weak and ineffective, arguing that national unity requires strong, decisive leadership. Mussolini famously dismissed democracy, stating, "Democracy is beautiful in theory; in practice, it is a fallacy."

## 6.5.3 Benito Mussolini and Fascism in Italy

Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) was the founder of Italian Fascism and the leader of Italy from 1922 to 1943. His rule marked the first successful establishment of a fascist state, influencing other totalitarian regimes, including Nazi Germany. His rise to power was shaped by political instability, economic crisis, and widespread dissatisfaction with

liberal democracy in post-World War I Italy. Mussolini's rule was characterised by authoritarianism, nationalism, militarisation, and suppression of opposition.

Mussolini was born in Predappio, Italy, in 1883 to a socialist father and a devout Catholic mother. His father, Alessandro Mussolini, was a blacksmith who supported revolutionary socialism, while his mother, Rosa Maltoni, was a schoolteacher. Influenced by his father's socialist views, Mussolini became an active member of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) in his youth. He worked as a journalist and became the editor of *Avanti*, the official newspaper of the PSI. However, his views shifted from socialism to nationalism during World War I, leading to his expulsion from the party in 1914.

During World War I, Mussolini advocated for Italy's entry into the conflict, believing it would strengthen national unity and create opportunities for expansion. After serving in the Italian Army, he returned to politics with a new ideology that blended nationalism, militarism, and authoritarianism. In 1919, he founded the Fascist Revolutionary Party, which later evolved into the National Fascist Party (*Partito Nazionale Fascista*, PNF) in 1921.

### 6.5.3.1 The Rise of Fascism in Italy

The postwar period in Italy was marked by economic instability, unemployment, social unrest, and political fragmentation. The Treaty of Versailles failed to grant Italy all the territorial rewards it had expected, leading to widespread discontent known as the "Mutilated Victory" (*Vittoria Mutilata*). Socialists and communists gained influence, leading to strikes, protests, and land occupations. The middle and upper classes, fearing a communist revolution similar to that in Russia, turned to Mussolini and his Fascist Party as a force of stability.

Mussolini's fascist movement gained momentum through paramilitary violence and propaganda. His supporters, known as the Blackshirts (*Squadristi*), attacked socialist and communist groups, violently suppressing opposition. The Italian government, unable to control the growing disorder, tolerated fascist violence, seeing it as a counterforce against leftist movements.

### 6.5.3.2 March on Rome and Mussolini's Seizure of Power

In October 1922, Mussolini orchestrated the March on Rome, a demonstration in which thousands of Blackshirts gathered to demand political power. The Italian Prime Minister, Luigi Facta, requested King Victor Emmanuel III to declare martial law, but the King refused, fearing a civil war. Instead, he invited Mussolini to form a government. On October 29, 1922, Mussolini became the youngest Prime Minister in Italian history at the age of 39.

Initially, Mussolini ruled within a coalition government, but he gradually consolidated power. By 1925, he had dismantled democratic institutions, banned opposition parties, and established a dictatorship. He assumed the title *Il Duce* ("The Leader") and ruled with absolute authority.

### 6.5.3.3 Mussolini's Totalitarian Rule

Once in power, Mussolini sought to transform Italy into a totalitarian state. His government controlled the press, suppressed dissent, and promoted fascist ideology. Education was heavily influenced by fascist propaganda, and youth organizations were established to indoctrinate children with nationalist ideals. The government used secret police and surveillance to eliminate political opponents, imprisoning or executing many socialists, communists, and anti-fascists.

Mussolini's economic policies were centered on corporatism, a system where industries were organised into state-controlled syndicates to regulate production and labor relations. His regime launched several initiatives, such as the "Battle for Grain," which aimed at agricultural self-sufficiency, and public works projects that constructed roads, railways, and buildings to reduce unemployment. However, these policies had mixed results, as Italy remained economically dependent on foreign imports and struggled with inefficiencies in its industrial sector.

#### **6.5.3.4 Foreign Policy and Military Expansion**

Mussolini pursued an aggressive foreign policy aimed at expanding Italy's influence and recreating the glory of the Roman Empire. His first major expansionist move was the invasion of Ethiopia in 1935. Despite condemnation from the League of Nations, Italy occupied Ethiopia, using brutal tactics, including chemical weapons. In 1936, Mussolini aligned with Nazi Germany, forming the Rome-Berlin Axis, which later became the foundation of the Axis Powers in World War II. He also supported General Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), further strengthening ties with Hitler.

In 1939, Mussolini ordered the invasion of Albania, further expanding Italian influence in the Balkans. However, Italy's military campaigns were poorly planned and often required German intervention to succeed.

#### **6.5.3.5 Italy in World War II and Mussolini's Fall**

When World War II began in 1939, Mussolini initially remained neutral but joined the war on the side of Germany in 1940, believing that Hitler's victories would allow Italy to gain new territories. However,

the Italian military was unprepared for large-scale warfare. Italy suffered defeats in North Africa, Greece, and the Soviet Union, weakening Mussolini's position. By 1943, the Allies had invaded Sicily, leading to internal dissent against Mussolini's leadership.

On July 25, 1943, Mussolini was deposed by the Fascist Grand Council and arrested by order of King Victor Emmanuel III. He was imprisoned, but German forces rescued him and placed him as the leader of the puppet Italian Social Republic in northern Italy. However, by 1945, as Allied forces advanced and Italian resistance movements grew stronger, Mussolini attempted to flee to Switzerland but was captured by Italian partisans. On April 28, 1945, he was executed in Giulino di Mezzegra, and his body was publicly displayed in Milan.

#### **6.5.4 Nazism**

Nazism, properly termed National Socialism, was the ideology of the German Nazi party, the National sozialistischer Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP, National Socialist German Workers' Party). Originally the Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, founded in 1919 and led by Anton Drexler, the small Bavarian party ended up under Adolf Hitler who would come to define it under his dictatorial charismatic leadership. The NSDAP emerged in the immediate aftermath of Germany's defeat in WW1, and the development a new right-wing politics in Europe after the Russian Revolution of 1917, and ostensibly combined a worker-oriented politics with a rejection of conventional socialist internationalism. The NSDAP emerged directly from the German völkisch milieu – a scene of radical racist nationalism that originated in the Nineteenth Century. The NSDAP also rejected core Marxist concepts like the class struggle, proclaiming the utopian Volksgemeinschaft (lit. national community), a cross-class racial community.

## 6.5.5 Birth of the Weimar Republic

Germany, a powerful empire in the early years of the twentieth century, fought the First World War (1914-1918) alongside the Austrian empire and against the Allies (England, France and Russia). All joined the war enthusiastically hoping to gain from a quick victory. Little did they realise that the war would stretch on, eventually draining Europe of all its resources. Germany made initial gains by occupying France and Belgium. However the Allies, strengthened by the US entry in 1917, won, defeating Germany and the Central Powers in November 1918.

The defeat of Imperial Germany and the abdication of the emperor gave an opportunity to parliamentary parties to recast German polity. A National Assembly met at Weimar and established a democratic constitution with a federal structure. Deputies were now elected to the German Parliament or Reichstag, on the basis of equal and universal votes cast by all adults including women. This republic, however, was not received well by its own people largely because of the terms it was forced to accept after Germany's defeat at the end of the First World War. The peace treaty at Versailles with the Allies was a harsh and humiliating peace.

Germany lost its overseas colonies, a tenth of its population, 13 per cent of its territories, 75 per cent of its iron and 26 per cent of its coal to France, Poland, Denmark and Lithuania. The Allied Powers demilitarised Germany to weaken its power. The War Guilt Clause held Germany responsible for the war and damages the Allied countries suffered. Germany was forced to pay compensation amounting to £6 billion. The Allied armies also occupied the resource-rich Rhineland for much of the 1920s. Many Germans held the new Weimar Republic responsible for not only the defeat in the war but the disgrace

at Versailles.

## 6.5.6 Hitler-Rise to Power

This crisis in the economy, polity and society formed the background to Hitler's rise to power. Born in 1889 in Austria, Hitler spent his youth in poverty. When the First World War broke out, he enrolled in the army, acted as a messenger in the front, became a corporal, and earned medals for bravery. The German defeat horrified him and the Versailles Treaty made him furious. In 1919, he joined a small group called the German Workers' Party. He subsequently took over the organisation and renamed it the National Socialist German Workers' Party. This party came to be known as the Nazi Party. In 1923, Hitler planned to seize control of Bavaria, march to Berlin and capture power. He failed, was arrested, tried for treason, and later released.

While in jail, Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*). This book set forth his beliefs and his goals for Germany. It became the blueprint, or plan of action, for the Nazis. Hitler asserted that the Germans, especially those who were blond and blue-eyed - whom he incorrectly called "Aryans" - were a "master race." He declared that non-Aryan "races" - such as Jews, Slavs, and Gypsies - were inferior or subhuman. He called the Versailles Treaty an outrage and vowed to regain the lands taken from Germany. Hitler also declared that Germany was overcrowded and needed more *lebensraum*, or living space. He promised to get that space by conquering eastern Europe and Russia. The Nazis could not effectively mobilise popular support till the early 1930s. It was during the Great Depression that Nazism became a mass movement. As we have seen, after 1929, banks collapsed and businesses shut down, workers lost their jobs and the middle classes were threatened with destitution. In such a situation Nazi propaganda stirred hopes of a better future. In 1928, the Nazi

Party got no more than 2.6 per cent votes in the Reichstag the German parliament. By 1932, it had become the largest party with 37 per cent votes

Hitler was a powerful speaker. His passion and his words moved people. He promised to build a strong nation, undo the injustice of the Versailles Treaty and restore the dignity of the German people.

- ◆ He promised employment for those looking for work, and a secure future for the youth. He promised to weed out all foreign influences and resist all foreign éconspiracies against Germany.
- ◆ Hitler devised a new style of politics. He understood the significance of rituals and spectacle in mass mobilisation. Nazis held massive rallies and public meetings to demonstrate the support for Hitler and instill a sense of unity among the people.
- ◆ The Red banners with the Swastika, the Nazi salute, and the ritualised rounds of applause after the speeches were all part of this spectacle of power Nazi propaganda that skilfully projected Hitler as a messiah, a savior, as someone who had arrived to deliver people from their distress. It is an image that captured the imagination of a people whose sense of dignity and pride had been shattered, and who were living in a time of acute economic and political crises.

### 6.5.7 The Destruction of Democracy

On 30 January 1933, President Hindenburg offered the Chancellorship, the highest position in the cabinet of ministers, to Hitler. By now the Nazis had managed to rally

the conservatives to their cause. Having acquired power, Hitler set out to dismantle the structures of democratic rule. A mysterious fire that broke out in the German Parliament building in February facilitated his move.

The Fire Decree of 28 February 1933 indefinitely suspended civic rights like freedom of speech, press and assembly that had been guaranteed by the Weimar constitution. Then he turned on his archenemies, the Communists, most of whom were hurriedly packed off to the newly established concentration camps. The repression of the Communists was severe. Out of the surviving 6,808 arrest files of Duesseldorf, a small city of half a million population, 1,440 were those of Communists alone. They were, however, only one among the 52 types of victims persecuted by the Nazis across the country.

- ◆ On 3 March 1933, the famous Enabling Act was passed. This Act established dictatorship in Germany. It gave Hitler all powers to sideline Parliament and rule by decree. All political parties and trade unions were banned except the Nazi Party and its affiliates.
- ◆ The state established complete control over the economy, media, army and judiciary.
- ◆ Special surveillance and security forces were created to control and order society in ways that the Nazis wanted.
- ◆ Apart from the already existing regular police in green uniform and the SA or the Storm Troopers, these included the Gestapo (secret state police), the SS (the protection squads), criminal police and the Security Service (SD).

- ◆ Hitler assigned the responsibility of economic recovery to the economist Hjalmar Schacht who aimed at full production and full employment through a state-funded work-creation programme. This project produced the famous German superhighways and the people's car, the Volkswagen. In foreign policy also Hitler acquired quick successes.
- ◆ He pulled out of the League of Nations in 1933, reoccupied the Rhineland in 1936, and integrated Austria and Germany in 1938 under the slogan, One people, One empire, and One leader.

He then went on to wrest German speaking Sudentenland from Czechoslovakia, and gobbled up the entire country. In all of this he had the unspoken support of England, which had considered the Versailles verdict too harsh. These quick successes at home and abroad seemed to reverse the destiny of the country. Hitler did not stop here. Schacht had advised Hitler against investing hugely in rearmament as the state still ran on deficit financing. Cautious people, however, had no place in Nazi Germany. Schacht had to leave. Hitler chose war as the way out of the approaching economic crisis. Resources were to be accumulated through expansion of territory. In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. This resulted a war with France and England. In September 1940, a Tripartite Pact was signed between Germany, Italy and Japan. Puppet regimes, supportive of Nazi Germany, were installed in a large part of Europe. By the end of 1940, Hitler was at the pinnacle of his power. Hitler now moved to achieve his long-term aim of conquering Eastern Europe. He wanted to ensure food supplies and living space for Germans. He attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941. In this historic blunder Hitler

exposed the German western front to British aerial bombing and the eastern front to the powerful Soviet armies. The Soviet Red Army inflicted a crushing and humiliating defeat on Germany at Stalingrad. After this the Soviet Red Army hounded out the retreating German soldiers until they reached the heart of Berlin, establishing Soviet hegemony over the entire Eastern Europe for half a century thereafter. Meanwhile, the USA had resisted involvement in the war. It was unwilling to once again face all the economic problems that the First World War had caused. But it could not stay out of the war for long. Japan was expanding its power in the east. It had occupied French Indo-China and was planning attacks on US naval bases in the Pacific. When Japan extended its support to Hitler and bombed the US base at Pearl Harbor, the US entered the Second World War. The war ended in May 1945 with Hitler's defeat and the US dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima in Japan.

### 6.5.8 End of Nazism

Nazism as a mass movement effectively ended on April 30, 1945, when Hitler committed suicide to avoid falling into the hands of Soviet troops completing the occupation of Berlin. Out of the ruins of Nazism arose a Germany that was divided until 1990. Remnants of Nazi ideology remained in Germany after Hitler's suicide, and a small number of Nazi-oriented political parties and other groups were formed in West Germany from the late 1940s, though some were later banned. In the 1990s gangs of neo-Nazi youths in eastern Germany staged attacks against immigrants, desecrated Jewish cemeteries, and engaged in violent confrontations with leftists and police. In the early 21st century, small neo-Nazi parties were to be found in most European countries as well as in the United States, Canada, and several Central

and South American countries

## 6.5.9 The Second World War

### 6.5.9.1 Causes of World War II

- 1. Treaty of Versailles:** An attempt was made at Paris Peace conference in 1919 to establish a just world order. But the treaty was drafted by victors and Germany was told to sign it. Germany raised many objections. But France had taken its revenge, Germany was deprived of all its overseas colonies. The treaty of Versailles had imposed humiliating conditions on the Central powers and sowed the seeds of the Second World War.
- 2. Rise of Dictatorship in Italy and Germany:** The dictatorship of the Fascist party, under the leadership of Mussolini, was established in Italy in 1922. The dictatorship of the Nazi party was established in Germany after Hitler came to power in 1933.
- 3. Expansionist Policy of the Axis Powers:** Germany, Italy and Japan were the Axis Powers which had pursued the expansionist policy during the inter-war period. Germany brought about the unification of the all-German speaking provinces by the annexation of Austria and Czechoslovakia. Italy annexed Ethiopia in 1936 and Albania in 1939. Japan invaded China in 1937 and occupied three-fourths of its territory by the middle of 1939.
- 4. Failure of Disarmament:** The

task of preparing a plan for reduction of armaments was entrusted to the League of Nation. No success could be achieved in this area. The temporary Mixed Commission appointed by the League in 1920 could not do any substantial work. In 1925 Preparatory Commission was constituted. It could not do any substantial work. Finally, a Disarmament Conference met in Geneva in February 1932 but could not reach any agreement. In 1935, Germany declared that she was no more bound by the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles.

- 5. The Problem of National Minorities:** The US President Wilson had advocated the concept of self-determination but his principle could not be implemented on various occasions. For instance, large German minorities were in company with non-Germans in Poland and Czechoslovakia. There were Russian minorities in Poland and Rumania. This gave rise to feeling of insecurity among the minorities.
- 6. Policy of Appeasement:** England and France ignored the acts of aggression by Germany and Italy and succumbed to their pressure. Appeasement was started by Prime Minister Baldwin but pursued by Neville Chamberlain in 1938. The policy of appeasement emboldened the aggressive nations. Appeasement meant agreeing to the demands of another nation in order to avoid conflict. During the

1930s, politicians in Britain and France began to believe that the Treaty of Versailles was unfair to Germany and that Hitler's actions were understandable and justifiable. This belief, adopted by Britain, was the Policy of Appeasement. An example of appeasement was the Munich Agreement of September 1938. In the Agreement, Britain and France allowed Germany to annex areas in Czechoslovakia where German-speakers lived. Germany agreed not to invade the rest of Czechoslovakia or any other country. In March 1939, Germany broke its promise and invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia. Neither Britain nor France was prepared to take military action. Then, on September 1, 1939, German troops invaded Poland. Britain and France immediately declared war on Germany. World War II had begun in Europe.

7. **The Weakness of the League of Nations:** The League of Nations was a helpless spectator when the Axis powers committed acts of aggression due to the fact that England and France followed the policy of appeasement towards the axis powers. It failed to maintain peace, to protect smaller nations against big powers. The US President Wilson was the principal architect of the league and promoter of disarmament. His own country could never become the member of the League. The League of Nations had several other shortcomings.
8. **Japan's Militarism** In 1931, Japan was hit badly by the

economic depression. Japanese people lost faith in the government. They turned to the army in order to find a solution to their economic problems. In order to produce more goods, Japan needed natural resources for its factories. The Japanese army invaded China, an area rich in minerals and resources. China asked for help from the League of Nations. Japan ignored the League of Nations and continued to occupy China and Korea. As Japan invaded other areas of South East Asia including Vietnam, the United States grew concerned about its territories in Asia, such as the Philippines and Guam. Japan felt that its expansion could be threatened by the United States military and attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in December 1941. World War II had begun in Asia

#### **6.5.9.2 Outbreak of World War II (1939)**

#### **The Nazi and Soviet Campaigns in Northeast Europe**

The Germans tested for the first time the tactics of Blitzkrieg “lightning war” against Poland. From Northern Germany to the forests on the Russian border there was scarcely a natural obstacle to stop an invading army. On 1 September 1939, an attack by Germany on Poland began the warfare that lasted six years and spread around the globe. Twelve hours after Hitler had attacked Poland, he replied to Roosevelt that he had, “left nothing untried for the purpose of settling the dispute in a friendly manner.” Poland fought alone as Czechoslovakia was dismembered and Russia had a non-aggression pact with Germany.

The German invasion of Poland brought French and British declarations of war on the Nazi state within two days. Italy did not enter the war at this time. Within less than two weeks, war tactics subdued most of Poland. Alarmed by this formidable military display, the Soviets rushed into their assault on eastern Poland in mid-September.

On 17 September, Stalin ordered the invasion of Poland by the Red Army. After a week, Polish resistance ended with the capture of the capital city of Warsaw. The Polish government surrendered. The Soviet Union and Germany each took about half of the conquered territory. Hitler annexed the former Free City of Danzig, the Corridor, and a number of other districts in the West. Stalin annexed Eastern Poland up to the frontier that Lord Curzon had originally proposed in 1919. Soon after the Soviets secured their holdings in Poland, they forcibly annexed the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) to provide an expanded security zone in the northwest.

### **Germany's Triumph over Western Europe**

As Stalin made an effort to seize security zones around the Baltic coast, Hitler prepared to take all of West Europe. Since Hitler did not attack France and Britain, Chamberlain responded in kind.

### **The Phony War**

Britain and France were at war with Germany beginning in September 1939. But for six months, France and Britain were not attacking when German armies were fighting in Poland. During this *drole de guerre*, *Sitzkrieg*, “phony war,” was not a war, it was the blockade. Britain strengthened its military force. After the Great War, France had built the Maginotline, a series of forts facing Germany. The French did nothing to increase the nation’s military power from September 1939, until April 1940.

### **The War in Finland**

The Winter war between Finland and the Soviet Union was fought apart from the main conflict. By the Nazi-Soviet Pact, Stalin obtained from Hitler a free hand to strengthen his defensive position by expanding into Poland and toward the Baltic. The USSR attempted to make its borders north of Leningrad more secure by taking Finnish territory north of Leningrad. The Finns refused to allow this annexation and prepared for war. From November 1939 and March 1940, Finland fought the USSR. When the French and British were ready to help Finland, it had already succumbed to Soviet arms. The Soviet army broke through, and Finland sued for peace. The peace treaty gave Stalin – the Karelian Isthmus, the city of Viipuri, and a naval base at Hango. The settlement with Finland provided protection for the Leningrad.

### **The French Surrender**

As Hitler’s armies approached Paris, Mussolini decided to declare war on France and Britain. The Germans needed no help in France. They took Paris by mid-June and continued towards South. France surrendered on 22 June. The Germans imposed their will on the vanquished in that very same railroad car at Compiegne in which Foch had handed his armistice terms to the Germans in November 1918. Although the Germans occupied and directly controlled most of France, they left a southwestern quadrant of the country under a puppet government. The fall of France came as the greatest shock to the Western democracy. The fall of France in June 1940 left Hitler supreme in the continent. His armies had conquered six nations. Finland, Sweden, and Switzerland remained neutral and posed no threat to Germany. Only Britain and the USSR stood between Hitler and the conquest of entire Europe.



## The Battle of Britain and Hitler's First Defeat

Chamberlain resigned and Winston Churchill became the British prime minister in May 1940. He denounced the policy of appeasement and demanded more powerful and speedy preparation for war. The intervention of the United States or the Soviet Union could give Britain a hope of victory. Britain's Royal Air Force and German Air Force fought the Battle of Britain until November 1940. A few thousand intrepid pilots of the RAF had won the Battle of Britain. As Churchill expressed, "Never in human history have so many owed so much to so few." After May and June 1941 Germany gave up the plan to invade Britain and turned its forces against the Soviet Union. This war cost the Nazis dearly which weakened the German Air Force. Soon after the Battle of Britain began, Mussolini decided to expand his empire. By December the Italians were losing on all the southern fronts.

## Pearl Harbor and Simultaneous Invasions (Early December 1941)

On December 7, 1941, Japanese warplanes commanded by Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo carried out a surprise air raid on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the largest U.S. naval base in the Pacific. The Japanese forces met little resistance and devastated the harbor. This attack resulted in 8 battleships either sunk or damaged, 3 light cruisers and 3 destroyers sunk as well as damage to some auxiliaries and 343 aircraft either damaged or destroyed. 2408 Americans were killed including 68 civilians; 1178 were wounded. Japan lost only 29 aircrafts and their crews and five midget submarines. However, the attack failed to strike targets that could have been crippling losses to the US Pacific Fleet such as the aircraft carriers which were out at sea at the time of the attack or the base's ship fuel storage and repair facilities. The survival of these assets have led many to

consider this attack a catastrophic long term strategic blunder for Japan.

The following day, the United States declared war on Japan. Simultaneously to the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan also attacked U.S. air bases in the Philippines. Immediately following these attacks, Japan invaded the Philippines and also the British Colonies of Hong Kong, Malaya, Borneo and Burma with the intention of seizing the oilfields of the Dutch East Indies.

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Germany declared war on the United States on 11 December 1941, even though it was not obliged to do so under the Tripartite Pact of 1940. Hitler made the declaration in the hope that Japan would support him by attacking the Soviet Union. Japan did not oblige him, and this diplomatic move proved a catastrophic blunder which gave President Franklin D. Roosevelt the pretext needed for the United States joining the fight in Europe with full commitment and with no meaningful opposition from Congress. Some historians mark this moment as another major turning point of the war with Hitler provoking a grand alliance of powerful nations, most prominently the UK, the USA and the USSR, who could wage powerful offensives on both East and West simultaneously.

## The End of the Nazi-Soviet Pact: A Soviet Triumph and Soviet Collapse

As Hitler had announced in Mein Kamph, he was resolved to eliminate the power of Russia. The Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact (1939) in no way reduced Hitler's commitment. Russia had moved in to create a defensive barrier in eastern Poland, Finland, the Baltic States and Bessarabia. Germany had extended its influence to Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania and smashed its way into Yugoslavia and Greece. The non-aggression pact was a "marriage of convenience" to be broken when it suited.

On 12 November 1940, foreign minister Molotov arrived in Berlin. The two did not reach a settlement. In late June 1941, a Nazi force stood for Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union. Hitler had several alternatives before him: to wage an all-out war against Great Britain, to seize the Mediterranean lands and march into the Middle East, or to start a new war against Russia. Hitler had concluded that a preventive war against Russia was an urgent necessity.

He wanted to avoid a two-front war. Britain was not strong enough to create a second front if Germany attacked Russia. This led to Hitler to conclude that Russia was to be conquered before Britain. Britain with the aid of the United States could create a serious diversion. These were the principle considerations which motivated the attack upon Russia. Stalin was warned by British, American and Soviet intelligence services. Stalin did not even listen to the friendly warning that the German ambassador gave them on the eve of attack. At first three offensives met with spectacular success.

After the first two weeks, Hitler found that his tactics did not work in Russia. With six months of secret preparation, German army attacked the Russian frontier. On 22 June 1941, the Nazi invasion began. Hitler was fighting on two fronts. The quality of Soviet equipment and military leadership did not match to that of Germany's advance weapons.

Stalin disappeared for eleven days leaving his people to fight "The Great Patriotic War." In September 1941, Nazi forces reached the outskirts of Leningrad and Moscow. On 3 July 1941 Stalin emerged, Soviets responded and stopped the Nazi line of advance in the North and Central regions by the autumn of 1941. In late 1941 and 1942, the nation rallied to the cause of resistance.

### **The Counter attack**

The Germans started their second general offensive against Moscow on 16 November. On 6 December 1941, the Red Army mounted its first counter attack along the entire front. The Red Army drive failed in the South while the Germans continued to advance there. The Soviets stopped them and inflicted a punishing defeat at Stalingrad. The Soviets counterattack finally began to succeed in the North in January 1944. The Red Army liberated almost all Soviet territory and pursued the Germans into Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria.

### **The Anti-Fascist Coalition**

From the beginning of the war, the United States provided support to Britain. America's Lend-Lease Act was established and expanded this programme in March 1941. After the Nazis invaded the USSR in June 1941, Britain and the Soviets signed a mutual aid agreement. Then the US began lend-lease assistance to the Soviet Union. As its consequence, an anti-Fascist coalition had begun to emerge.

### **The Atlantic Charter**

Churchill and Roosevelt discussed peace and military aid at a conference in August 1941 that produced the Atlantic Charter. This declaration contained a pledge to stop aggressors and ensure the right of all nations to choose their form of government. Britain and the United States promised to advance the welfare of societies and hence pursued peace during the next four years.

### **The Intervention of the United States**

With the American intervention, the Second World War attained its final form. Britain and the United States shared with the Soviet Union a common enemy in Fascism. The US provided aid to Britain and the USSR in the war. Until December 1941, the US was not fighting. Events in

Asia transformed the European conflict into a global war with the US as a main participant. Under militant nationalist influence, Japan conquered territory in China in 1931 and 1937. With an air attack on the US Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands on 7 December 1941, Japan intended to end this influence in Asia. Japan's Italian and German allies declared war on the United States on 11 December. Immediately the US entered the war in Asia becoming an ally of Britain and the USSR in Europe.

### **The Defeat of Fascist Italy**

On 10 July 1943, the US and Britain launched invasions of Sicily and began intensive attack on Italy. King Victor Emmanuel III reasserted his authority and dismissed Mussolini as premier. Pietro Badoglio, the new premier ordered the Fascist Party to disband and opened peace talks with the Western Allies. On 3 September 1943 Badoglio government agreed to unconditional surrender. Hitler had anticipated the collapse of his Italian ally and rushed troops to central and northern Italy. Hitler sent a force to rescue Mussolini, who had been under arrest since his dismissal. The Nazis then reestablished Mussolini as the head of a German puppet state in northern Italy. As the Nazi defeat in Italy neared by the end of April 1945, Mussolini tried to escape to Switzerland. Italian anti-Fascist resistance forces captured and executed Mussolini on 28 April 1945.

### **6.5.10 Consequences of World War II**

With the end of the Second World War, the European age had come to an end. When the Second World War ended, the US and the Soviet Union emerged as the super powers, main challengers of each other's supremacy and leaders of two different ideologies. As soon as the enemy was defeated, East-West ideological conflict reemerged. Post-Second World War was different in regard to the

level of tension

The Soviet Union developed its nuclear weapon in 1949. Earlier only the US had its monopoly over nuclear powers. Thus, the nuclear age had begun. At the end of the Second World War, there occurred decline in the influence of colonial powers. The two super powers followed anti-colonial approach. United Nations was set up in 1945 to replace the League of Nations as it had failed to maintain peace.

### **6.5.11 Formation of UNO**

#### **6.5.11.1 The Charter of the United Nations**

It is a set of guidelines that explains the rights and duties of each Member country, and what needs to be done to achieve the goals they have set for themselves. When a nation becomes a Member of the UN, it accepts the aims and rules of the Charter.

The idea of the United Nations was born during World War II (1939-1945). World leaders who had collaborated to end the war felt a strong need for a mechanism that would help bring peace and stop future wars. They realised that this was possible only if all nations worked together through a global organisation. The United Nations was to be that organisation.

The name "United Nations" was suggested by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was first officially used in 1942, when representatives of 26 countries signed the Declaration by United Nations. As a tribute to President Roosevelt, who died a few weeks before the signing of the Charter, all those present at the San Francisco Conference agreed to adopt the name "United Nations".

At its first meeting in London in 1946, the General Assembly decided to locate the United Nations Headquarters in the

United States. However, New York was not the first choice. Philadelphia, Boston and San Francisco were also considered. What eventually persuaded the General Assembly to settle on the present site was a last-minute gift of \$8.5 million from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Later, New York City offered additional property as a gift. On 24 October 1949, Secretary-General Trygve Lie laid the cornerstone of the 39-storey building. On 21 August 1950, the Secretariat staff began moving into their new offices.

The United Nations Headquarters is an international zone. This means that the land on which the UN sits does not belong to just the United States, the host country, but to all the Members of the United Nations. The UN has its own flag and its own security officers who guard the area. It also has its own post office and issues its own stamps. These stamps can be used only from UN Headquarters or from UN offices in Vienna and Geneva.

### **6.5.11.2 Organs of the United Nations**

#### **1. The General Assembly**

All members of the United Nations (currently 193) are represented in the General Assembly. Each nation, rich or poor, large or small, has one vote. Decisions on such issues as international peace and security, admitting new members and the UN budget are decided by a two thirds majority. Other matters are decided by simple majority. In recent years, a special effort has been made to reach decisions through consensus, rather than by taking a formal vote. The General Assembly's regular session begins each year in September and continues throughout the year. At the beginning of each regular session, the Assembly holds a general debate at which Heads of State or Government and others present views on a wide-ranging agenda of issues of concern to the international

community, from war and terrorism to disease and poverty. In 2005, world leaders gathered at UN Headquarters in New York for the General Assembly High Level Summit and to commemorate the organisation's 60th birthday. Each year, the Assembly elects a president who presides over—that is, runs—the meetings.

#### **2. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**

The Economic and Social Council is the forum to discuss economic problems, such as trade, transport, economic development, and social issues. It also helps countries reach agreement on how to improve education and health conditions and to promote respect for and observance of universal human rights and freedoms of people everywhere.

It serves as the main forum for international economic and social issues; Promotes higher standards of living, full employment and economic and social progress; Advances solutions to international economic, social and health-related problems, as well as international cultural and educational cooperation.

The Council has 54 members, who serve for three-year terms. Voting in the Council is by simple majority; each member has one vote. Each year, the Council holds several short sessions with regard to the organization of its work, often including representatives of civil society. The Economic and Social Council also holds an annual four-week substantive session in July, alternating the venue between Geneva and New York.

#### **3. The Trusteeship Council**

In 1945, when the United Nations was established, there were eleven territories (mostly in Africa and in the Pacific Ocean) that were placed under international supervision. The major goals of the Trusteeship system were to promote the advancement of the

inhabitants of Trust Territories and their progressive development towards self-government or independence.

The Trusteeship Council is composed of the permanent members of the Security Council (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States). Each member has one vote, and decisions are made by a simple majority.

#### 4. The International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) was established in 1946 as the main UN organ for handing down legal judgments. Only countries, not individuals, can take cases before the Court. Once a country agrees to let the Court act on a case, it must agree to comply with the Court's decision. In addition, other organs of the UN may seek an advisory opinion from the Court. As of June 2006, the ICJ had delivered 92 judgments on disputes between states, including cases on territorial boundaries, diplomatic relations, not interfering in countries' domestic affairs, and hostage-taking.

The Court sits at the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands. It has fifteen judges who are elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council. No two judges can come from the same country. Nine judges have to agree before a decision can be made. All the judgments passed by the Court are final and without appeal. If one of the states involved fails to comply with the decision, the other party may take the issue to the Security Council. On 6 February 2006, Judge Rosalyn Higgins (United Kingdom), the sole woman Member of the Court, was elected the first female President of the International Court for a term of three years.

After the Court concluded public hearings in 2006, it decided to hear the case brought by Bosnia and Herzegovina alleging that Serbia and Montenegro had breached their

obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. In 2004, the Court unanimously reaffirmed that Israel's construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory violates international law. In 2002, the Court ruled on the border dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon, placing the main territory under dispute, the Bakassi Peninsula, under Cameroonian sovereignty.

#### 5. The Secretariat

The Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, consists of an international staff working at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and all over the world. It carries out the day-to-day work of the Organisation. Its duties are as varied as the problems dealt with by the United Nations. These range from administering peacekeeping operations to mediating international disputes or surveying social and economic trends and problems. The Secretariat is responsible for servicing the other organs of the United Nations and administering the programmes and policies laid down by them.

To gather and prepare background information on various problems so that the government delegates can study the facts and make their recommendations; To help carry out the decisions of the United Nations; To organise international conferences; To interpret speeches and translate documents into the UN's official languages'

The Secretary-General is the chief officer of the United Nations. He or she is assisted by a staff of international civil servants. Unlike diplomats, who represent a particular country, the civil servants work for all 193 Member countries and take their orders not from governments, but from the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General is appointed for a period of five years by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the

Security Council. There have been eight Secretaries-General since the UN was created. The appointment of the Secretary-General follows a regional rotation.

- ◆ Trygve Lie (Norway) 1946-1952
- ◆ Dag Hammarskjöld (Sweden) 1953-1961
- ◆ U Thant (Myanmar) 1961-1971
- ◆ Kurt Waldheim (Austria) 1972-1981
- ◆ Javier Pérez de Cuéllar (Peru) 1982-1991
- ◆ Boutros Boutros- Ghali (Egypt) 1992-1996
- ◆ Kofi Annan (Ghana) 1997-2006
- ◆ Ban Ki-moon (South Korea) 2007-2016.
- ◆ António Guterres -2017-.

### 6.5.11.3 Some Achievements by the UN

- ◆ The UN was a promoter of the

great movement of decolonisation, which led to the independence of more than 80 nations.

- ◆ The UN is a major purchaser of goods and services, totalling over \$6.4 billion a year. UNICEF buys half the vaccines produced worldwide.
- ◆ UN relief agencies together provide aid and protection to more than 23 million refugees and displaced persons worldwide.
- ◆ The UN defines technical standards in telecommunication, aviation, shipping and postal services, which make international transactions possible.
- ◆ UN campaigns for universal immunization against childhood diseases have eradicated smallpox and reduced cases of polio by 99 per cent.
- ◆ The World Food Programme, the UN's front-line food aid organisation, ships over 5 million tonnes of food annually, feeding some 113 million people in 80 countries.

## Recap

- ◆ Fascism was a political ideology and mass movement that spread across Europe and beyond between 1919 and 1945, with leaders like Mussolini and Hitler
- ◆ Mussolini founded Italy's Fascist Party, emphasising extreme nationalism, militarism, and authoritarian control, influencing regimes across Europe and other continents
- ◆ Mussolini's foreign policy included aggressive expansion, exemplified by the invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 and Italy's alignment with Nazi Germany in 1936
- ◆ The Nazi Party, led by Adolf Hitler, grew from the German Workers' Party and promoted racist nationalism, rejecting Marxism and focusing on the concept of Volksgemeinschaft
- ◆ Nazi propaganda became effective during the Great Depression, as the Nazis promised employment and a restored national dignity, gaining mass support despite initial electoral failures
- ◆ Hitler's rise was marked by strategic use of mass rallies, symbols, and spectacle, portraying himself as a savior of Germany's pride and future in the face of economic collapse
- ◆ Nazism effectively ended with Hitler's suicide in 1945, but neo-Nazi groups persisted in the post-war period, continuing to promote Nazi ideology in Germany and abroad
- ◆ The Treaty of Versailles, imposed on Germany after WWI, sowed the seeds of WWII by creating resentment over its humiliating terms
- ◆ The policy of appeasement, pursued by Britain and France, emboldened Axis Powers, exemplified by the Munich Agreement allowing Germany to annex Czechoslovakia
- ◆ The League of Nations' inability to prevent Axis aggression showcased its weakness, as it failed to intervene in key international conflicts leading up to WWII
- ◆ The United Nations Charter outlines the rights and duties of member nations, and the steps required to achieve the organisation's goals for global peace and cooperation
- ◆ The idea of the United Nations emerged during World War II, as leaders sought a global organisation to prevent future conflicts and promote international collaboration

- ◆ The UN Headquarters is considered an international zone, with its own flag, security, post office, and stamps, not belonging solely to the United States.

## Objective Questions

1. Which organisation was established at the initiative of the victorious Allied Powers at the end of World War I?
2. Where is the headquarters of IMF (International Monetary Fund)?
3. When was the United Nations adopted the Charter of Economic Rights?
4. Which Conference adopted the United Nations Charter on 26th January, 1945?
5. How many member states make up the United Nations today?
6. What is the title of the chief administrative officer of the United Nations?
7. At which conference did Nazi leaders meet to plan the “final solution” to the “Jewish question”?
8. What is the name of the attack on Jewish people and property that symbolizes the final shattering of Jewish existence in Germany in the 1930s?
9. Which book was considered the bible of National Socialism in Germany’s Third Reich?

## Answers

1. League of Nations
2. Washington
3. December 1980
4. San Francisco Conference

5. 193
6. Secretary General.
7. Wannsee Conference
8. Kristallnacht
9. *Mein Kampf*

## Assignments

1. Discuss the role of the United Nations in promoting global peace and security.
2. Evaluate the achievements of the United Nations in the areas of humanitarian assistance and development.
3. Analyse the causes and consequences of the Second World War.
4. Discuss how Nazi ideology influenced the policies of the Third Reich and the consequences of these policies on Germany and the world.
5. Analyse the rise of fascism in Europe during the early 20th century.

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5. Palmer, R. R. *History of the Modern World*. Macmillan, 1976.
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## Suggested Reading

1. Anderson, M. S. *Europe in the Eighteenth Century*. 1987, London.
2. Dickens, A. G. *German Nation and Martin Luther*. 1974, London.
3. McDonough, Frank. *The Origins of the First and Second World Wars*. Cambridge UP, 1997.
4. Mower, R. B. *A History of European Diplomacy*. 1927, London.





QP CODE: .....

Reg. No : .....

Name : .....

Model Question Paper Set- I  
FOURTH SEMESTER B.A HISTORY EXAMINATION  
DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE COURSE  
B21HS01DE - EMERGENCE OF MODERN WORLD  
(CBCS - UG)  
2023-24 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

## SECTION A

*Answer any ten questions of the following. Each question carries one mark.*

**(10x1 = 10 Marks)**

1. Who was the author of the work '*On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*'?
2. Who introduced the concept of 'separation of powers'?
3. What event triggered the "Great Fear" in France during 1789?
4. Which invention revolutionised textile manufacturing?
5. Who is considered the father of modern socialism?
6. Which battle marked the end of the Civil War in the USA?
7. Name the organisation formed by Mazzini.
8. Who delivered the "Blood and Iron" speech in 1862?
9. When was the International Court of Justice (ICJ) established?
10. When was the Treaty of Versailles signed?
11. Who was the founder of Italian Fascism?
12. Who discovered the *Law of Gravitation*?
13. Where can Michelangelo's paintings be found?

14. Who was the author of the work *Civil War in the History of England 1603-1656*?
15. When was the Long Parliament convened?

## SECTION B

*Answer any **ten** questions of the following. Each question carries **two** marks.*

**(10x2 =20 Marks)**

16. Leonardo da Vinci
17. Council of Trent
18. Petition of Right 1628
19. The Battle of Vicksburg
20. Austro-Prussian War of 1866
21. Lenin's Radicalism
22. Lavr Kornilov
23. The Red Terror
24. Weimar Republic
25. The Seven Years' War (1756-1763)
26. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
27. The Tennis Court Oath
28. Simon Bolivar
29. Balfour Declaration
30. Missouri Compromise

## SECTION C

*Write a short note on any **five** questions of the following. Each question carries **four** marks.*  
**(5x4 = 20 Marks)**

31. What is the core belief of Calvinism, and how does it differ from other Protestant teachings?
32. What were the significant beliefs of Zwinglianism regarding church authority?

33. Explain the significance of the Olive Branch Petition.
34. Discuss the causes for the emergence of Industrialism.
35. Examine the positive impacts of the Industrial Revolution.
36. Examine the role of the Congress of Vienna and its influence on Bismarck's policies.
37. Discuss the main principles of Fascism.
38. How did the Glorious Revolution mark a pivotal moment in England's history?
39. Write briefly about the features of the Reign of Terror.
40. Discuss Rousseau's critique of modern society in *The Social Contract*.

#### SECTION D

*Answer any two questions of the following. Each question carries ten marks.*

**(2x10 =20 Marks)**

41. Analyse the impact of Renaissance art and architecture. How did artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo shape this cultural movement?
42. Analyse the causes of the English Civil War. What were the political, religious, and social factors that led to the conflict between the monarchy and Parliament?
43. Analyse the key social, political, and economic causes of the French Revolution. How did these factors contribute to the breakdown of the Ancien Régime and the rise of revolutionary ideas?
44. Evaluate the role of Mazzini and Cavour in the Unification of Italy.



QP CODE: .....

Reg. No : .....

Name : .....

Model Question Paper Set- II  
FOURTH SEMESTER B.A HISTORY EXAMINATION  
DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE COURSE  
B21HS01DE - EMERGENCE OF MODERN WORLD  
(CBCS - UG)  
2023-24 - Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

## SECTION A

*Answer any **ten** questions of the following. Each question carries **one** mark.*

**(10x1 = 10 Marks)**

1. Who coined the term Scientific Revolution?
2. When was the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen adopted?
3. In which year did the Battle of Trafalgar take place?
4. Who developed the steam engine that powered the Industrial Revolution?
5. In which year was the Congress of Vienna held?
6. Who founded the People's International League in 1847?
7. Which battle was the decisive one in the Austro-Prussian War?
8. Which book was considered the bible of National Socialism in Germany's Third Reich?
9. Where was the United Nations Headquarters located?
10. Who was the first female President of the International Court?
11. Who was the author of the work 'Letters on Sunspots'?
12. What is the meaning of the word 'Renaissance'?
13. Who was the king during the time of the Long Parliament?

14. Which were the two factions that had emerged in Parliament in 1670?
15. Who coined the term 'General Will'?

## SECTION B

*Answer any **ten** questions of the following. Each question carries **two** marks.*

**(10x2 =20 Marks)**

16. The Theatines
17. The Magna Carta 1215
18. Boston Tea Party 1773
19. Thermidorian Reaction
20. The Women's March on Versailles
21. Fundamental principles of socialism
22. The Monroe Doctrine
23. The Battle of Antietam
24. The Metternich system
25. Zollverein
26. Treaty of Versailles
27. Disarmament
28. The Mandate system
29. The April Theses
30. Lorenzo Valla

## SECTION C

*Write a short note on any **five** questions of the following. Each question carries **four** marks.*

**(5X4 = 20 Marks)**

31. Briefly explain the significant principles of the Enlightenment.
32. Explain the significance of the September Massacres in the context of the French Revolution.
33. Write briefly about different mechanisms of neocolonialism.
34. Examine the negative impact of the Industrial Revolution.

35. Write a short note on 'Treaty of Frankfurt'.
36. How did the Thirty Years' War shift the focus of European conflicts from religion to politics?
37. What were the main activities and areas of focus of the Oratorian Congregation?
38. Explain the impact of the American War of Independence.
39. Discuss the political philosophy of Thomas Jefferson.
40. Write a short note on President Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points.

#### SECTION D

*Answer any **two** questions of the following. Each question carries **ten** marks.*

**(2x10 =20 Marks)**

41. Analyse the impact of the Reformation on European society.
42. What were the key causes of the American Revolution? Analyse the political, economic, and social factors that led to the colonies' decision to seek independence from Britain.
43. Discuss the influence of Enlightenment thinkers on the French Revolution.
44. Evaluate the role of Otto von Bismarck in the unification of Germany. How did his policies and strategies contribute to the creation of the 'German Empire' in 1871?



## സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യയാൽ സ്വത്രതരാകണം  
വിശ്വപ്രതരഥി മാറണം  
ഗഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം  
സുരൂപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കൂദിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു തെങ്ങങ്ങളെ  
സുരൂവീമിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം  
സ്വനേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം  
നീതിവെജയയന്തി പാറണം

ശാസ്ത്രവ്യാപ്തിയെന്നുമേകണം  
ജാതിഭേദമാകെ മാറണം  
ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ  
അതാനക്കേന്നുമേ ജൂലിക്കണേ

കുരീപ്പും ശ്രീകുമാർ

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Kollam, Kerala Pin- 691601, email: info@sgou.ac.in, www.sgou.ac.in Ph: +91 474 2966841



ISBN 978-81-982754-7-9



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