

# The Revolutions of 1848



# What's the big deal?

- Liberal and nationalist revolutions occur throughout Europe
  - France
  - Austria
  - Prussia
  - Italy
- Despite initial success, 1848 is mostly a failure for the revolutionaries
  - However, these ideologies will continue to grow, especially within the Italian states and the German Confederation in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century



# France: February 1848

- Reign of Louis Philippe
  - Characterized by social inaction
  - Gov't bureaucrats were corrupt
  - Electoral system was extremely limited
- Popular revolt of urban workers forced Louis to abdicate
  - A provisional republic was proclaimed



# Reforms of the French Provisional Republic

- Liberal-influenced
  - Establishment of universal male suffrage
  - Abolition of slavery in the colonies
  - Abolition of the death penalty
- Socialist-influenced
  - Establishment of a ten-hour work day



# French Factionalism and Compromise?

- Moderate republicans
  - Middle class
  - Proponents of liberal economics
- Radical republicans
  - More sympathetic to the urban workers
  - Proponents of socialism
- Temporary Compromise
  - At the insistence of Blanc, national workshops were created to abolish unemployment



# The Free Elections of April 1848 and the Socialist Reaction

- Growth of socialism in Paris alienated the landowning peasants
  - Result: The moderate republicans won the election 5:1
- May 15 – Workers unsuccessfully invaded the new assembly, seeking to overthrow the moderate republicans



DEFENDING THE STREET BARRICADES IN 1848

From a contemporary print.

# “June Days” of 1848

- June 22 – Gov’t dissolved the growing national workshops
- Result: Class warfare in the streets of Paris
  - Ultimately, the republican army defeated the urban workers
- In reaction, the moderates created a constitution featuring a strong executive
  - In December, Louis Napoleon would be elected President of the Second French Republic!



# Austria: Hungarian Nationalism → Austrian Liberalism

- Under Louis Kossuth, Hungarian nationalists demanded
  - Autonomy
  - Civil Liberties
  - Universal suffrage
- Sparked a liberal revolt of students in Vienna in March
  - Ferdinand I gave in to the liberals, and Metternich fled to England!
  - Ferdinand gave in to the Hungarians and granted them limited self-government!



# Downfall of the Revolutionary Coalition of March

- Ferdinand abolished serfdom
  - The peasants desired nothing else and now could be used as an ally of the conservatives!
- Factionalism among the revolutionaries
  - The conservatives played the many different ethnic groups against the Hungarians who desired their own state!
  - Czech nationalists also conflicted heavily with German nationalists in their region!
- Class division!
  - As urban workers began to demand socialism, the middle class grew fearful and conservative!



# Conservative Victory in Austria

- June 17 – Austrian troops crush a working-class revolt in Prague
- July – Austrian troops crush a nationalist revolt in Italy
- October – Austrian troops retake Vienna!
- Ferdinand is forced to abdicate for his nephew, Francis Joseph
  - June 1849 – Russia and Austria crushed the Hungarian independence movement



# Prussia: Liberal Revolt in Berlin

- March – The Prussian king refused to give in to liberal demands
- Result: Berlin revolt
  - Unification of middle-class and urban workers
  - Frederick William IV collapsed and conceded to two demands:
    - Constitution
    - Unification of Germany



# The Frankfurt Assembly

- Middle-class members from all German states met at Frankfurt to draw up a federal constitution for a unified Germany
- Schleswig-Holstein Question:
  - Germans went to war with Denmark over territory inhabited by Germans
- Grossdeutsch vs Kleindeutsch?
  - Austrians stayed out, and Frederick William IV was offered the crown of Germany
- German Unification = FAIL!
  - Frederick William refuses to accept the “crown from the gutter”
  - He dissolves the Berlin Assembly and reestablishes autocratic rule in Prussia



n Confederation, 1815

# Success and Failures of 1848?

- What success did the liberals and nationalists have in 1848?
- What failures did the liberals and nationalists experience in 1848?



 *Revolutions of 1830 and 1848. In less than a generation, Europe saw two major revolutions sweep across it from west to east. France experienced the full force of both events, which pulled down successive regimes.*