Nations, States, and Europe after 1848

St. Peter’s Square, Vatican City [Rome]
(panoramic photo from dome of St. Peter’s)
1848 revolutions do not dramatically change Europe’s map or social structure. Still they are important:

Springtime of the people: 1848 = 1968?

“1848 is the turning point where Germany failed to turn.” (A.J.P. Taylor)

June Days are the first instance of modern class warfare. (Marx)

In general, 1848 reveals that “liberal” revolutions for individual rights encounter problems with groups of people (these may be identified on ethnic, class, gender, or religious grounds).

What does this suggest about the abstract liberal individual?
“There are in Europe two great questions; or, rather, the question of the transformation of authority—that is to say, of the Revolution—has assumed two forms; the question which all have agreed to call social, and the question of nationalities. .. I say, ‘which all have agreed to call social,’ because, generally speaking, every great revolution is so far social, in that it cannot be accomplished either in the religious, political, or any other sphere, without affecting social relations and the sources and distribution of wealth.”

Mazzini, “Europe, its Conditions and Prospects”
Westminster Review (1852).

“Liberty our aim, Washington our example!”
Political Map of Europe after Congress of Vienna (1814-1815)
Europe in the “Age of Nation-State Building, 1850s-1870s”

Nationalities question in the aftermath of 1848
Europe in the “Age of Nation-State Building, 1850s-1870s”

Formation of modern German and Italian states

How have historians explained these developments?

Why do they matter? What is their significance?

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER
state=legal, administrative structure
nation=group of people believed to have something in common

History 104 (11 February 2009): lecture structure
1848-1849 in Rome

Pius IX (pope from 1846-1878) elected as a “liberal” and grudgingly grants constitution for Papal States in March 1848; refuses to support Italian nationalist uprisings in Milan or Venice.

Nov. 1848—minister assassinated; crowds demand democratic government; Pius IX flees to Naples.

Feb. 1849—Roman Republic declared, three-man executive headed by Mazzini; guaranteed freedom of religion, free press; Catholic Church’s lands nationalized.

June 1849—French troops bombard Rome; Republic defended by Garibaldi’s Italian Legions, but eventually defeated and French troops restore Pius IX.

Creation of modern Italian state is NOT the result of popular nationalism.
Italian Peninsula in 1859

Tuscany=Habsburg Grand Duke
Two Sicilies=Bourbon King
Piedmont=Savoy King
War, Piedmontization, and the making of modern Italy

1858 secret treaty signed at Plombières, France agrees to support Piedmont-Sardinia in war against Austria

summer 1859 “Franco-Austrian War”; peace treaty makes Tuscany part of “United Provinces of Italy”; France gets Nice and Savoy

spring 1860 Expedition of Garibaldi’s Thousand Red Shirts from Piedmont to aid popular uprisings against Bourbon monarchy in Sicily

Sept. 1860 after victory in Sicily, Garibaldi plans march on Rome

Oct. 1860 Garibaldi (revolutionary, republican general) yields Sicily to Victor-Emmanuel II

March 1861 Victor Emmanuel proclaimed “King of Italy”

1866 Austro-Prussian War; Austria loses “German Civil War” and cedes Venetia to Italy

1870 Franco-Prussian War: French troops recalled from Rome and Italian army invades; plebiscite unites Papal States to Italy; Pope Pius IX describes himself as “prisoner”

chronology of military and diplomatic events that produce “Italy”
The Professors’ Parliament and a “crown from the gutter”

Heinrich von Gagern as member of the German “national assembly” (Frankfort Parliament), 1848-1849

meeting of the Frankfort Parliament in the Paulskirche, 1848-1849

creation of modern German state is NOT the result of liberal-professional nationalism
Wars of German “Unification”

1861 William I becomes King of Prussia; liberal parliament refuses funding for military restructuring

1861-1862 popular peaceful demonstrations in support of parliament; King almost flees

Sept. 1862 Chancellor Bismarck “The great questions of the time will be decided not by speeches and majority decisions but by iron and blood”

1863-1864 Schleswig-Holstein controversy

1866 Austro-Prussian War (also known as the German Civil War) ends with Prussian victory, creation of North German Confederation

1870-1871 Franco-Prussian War; Second German Empire declared at Versailles; Germany annexes Alsace and Lorraine

chronology of military and diplomatic events that produce “Germany”
Kaiserreich (German Empire), 1871-1918

kleindeutsch = small Germany
großdeutsch = large Germany

Population of Berlin:
- 1650: 20,000
- 1750: 100,000
- 1850: 400,000
- 1870: 826,000
- 1910: 2,071,000
“Not by political speeches but by iron and blood”?

Political “realism” (*realpolitik*) versus idealism of 1848
(political/cultural change)

Industrialization of Prussian Rhineland creates need for larger markets, “liberalization” of credit and banking regulations
(economic/social change)

Sonderweg or not?

Are Germany and Italy “belated” nations?

Are they formed in an “other” way?

If German and Italian nation-state formation is defined as “abnormal,” how are historians defining “normal”? Can the British or French case really be considered a “norm”—given that the two differ dramatically from each other and that neither is a statistical average?

Why are the creation of modern Germany and Italy in the 1850s-1860s significant for modern history?