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**Introduction**

**WORLD POWER AND ENLIGHTENED DESPOTISM**

The lands of the present Austrian state have provided remnants of human habitation since the Early Stone Age. The Celts, invading around 400 B.C., established the first known political organization in that region, the Kingdom of Noricum. Around 15 B.C. the area south of the Danube fell under Roman rule. Among the important Roman centers were Carnuntum near Hamburg and Vindobona on the present site of Vienna. Pressure from German tribes and the Huns forced an abandonment of the area by the Romans in the fifth century A.D. Thereafter the territory was in contention among Slavs, Avars, and German tribes. Of the last, the Bavarians settled throughout the region, whereas the Alemani concentrated in the present-day province of Vorarlberg. A major change occurred during the reign of the Frankish emperor Charlemagne (771-814). After defeating the Bavarians and the Avars, he established in 788 an administrative division, or March, as a defense against future invaders, in particular the Avars. The center included Upper and Lower Austria, the two regions being separated by the Enns River. Subsequently, the Austrian lands fell under the control of the Moravian kingdom and then of the Magyars. The first important ruling family, the Babenbergs (976-1246), received the land as an imperial fief from the Holy Roman Emperor Otto II, whose father, Otto I, had freed the area from Magyar control. In the twelfth century Styria and other lands were added to the Babenberg possessions. At this time Vienna became the capital; the cathedral of St. Stephen's and the Hofburg (the court residence), henceforth central Viennese landmarks, date from this time. In 1246, as a result of a disputed inheritance, the Babenberg lands were taken by the Bohemian king, Premysl Otakar II (1253-1278).

The Habsburg rule over the Austrian lands was established soon after Rudolph I (1273-1291) was elected Holy Roman Emperor in 1273. The Habsburg family, whose name was a contraction of the name of their Swiss residence, Habichtsburg or Hawks Castle, built about 1020, held territory principally in Alsace as well as in Breisgau and Aargau in present-day Switzerland. In 1276 Rudolph forced Otakar II to surrender his Austrian possessions, and in 1278 he defeated and killed the Bohemian king on the Marchfeld near Vienna. Thereafter the Austrian lands became the base of power for the House of Habsburg, which was also called the House of Austria. The Habsburg position, however, was circumscribed by the fact that the rulers were feudal lords and in no sense national monarchs; as such they met with constant opposition from the local aristocracy. Their position was further weakened by the family's failure to adopt the principle of primogeniture. Since at the death of the head of the family all sons had equal rights to the inheritance, the Habsburg lands suffered repeated partition. Although over the years the territories tended to merge again, this legacy of repeated redistribution weakened Habsburg power and influence.

The center of the family possessions nonetheless remained Upper and Lower Austria, with Vienna as the capital. Other regions were acquired in permanent possession in the fourteenth century and came henceforth to be considered as part of the Hereditary Lands: Carinthia (1335), Carniola (1335), Tirol (1363), and Vorarlberg (1375). Whether these regions were governed by the head of the house or by an archduke, the ruler had to take into consideration the views of the local diets. As elsewhere in Central Europe, these were composed of representatives from the nobility and landed aristocracy, the clergy, and the city dwellers.

**GREAT-POWER ASCENDANCY**

In the sixteenth century immense territories were to be added to this base. The Habsburg Monarchy became the major world power largely as a result of chance and of the marriage policies of Maximilian I (1493-1519). In 1477 Maximilian married Mary of Burgundy. When she died he claimed the Netherlands and part of Burgundy as Habsburg possessions. His children, Philip and Margaret, were married to John and Johanna, whose parents were Ferdinand and Isabella; their possessions included not only Spain and extensive lands in Italy, but also the great Spanish conquests in the newly discovered Americas. Of Maximilian's grandchildren, Charles married Isabella of Portugal, whereas Ferdinand and Mary were betrothed to the children of Louis II, the Jagiellon king of Hungary and Bohemia. The immense heritage of these marriages was brought under Habsburg control during the reign of Charles V (1519-1556). At his accession he acquired Spain with its Italian and American possessions, Burgundy, the Netherlands, the Austrian Hereditary Lands, and other scattered regions. In 1526 at the battle of Mohacs the Ottoman army defeated Louis II, who died during the fighting. Bohemia and the part of Hungary not under Ottoman occupation thus came into Habsburg possession.

In addition to holding these vast domains Charles V continued the Habsburg
tradition, which had been broken only twice since 1273, of being elected Holy Roman Emperor, an office signifying that the holder was in theory the chief temporal ruler in Western Christendom. Contemporaries regarded it not only as the highest secular position, but also as having been created by God. At this time the emperor was chosen by three ecclesiastical electors (the archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier) and four secular rulers (the duke of Saxony, the count of the Palatinate, the margrave of Brandenburg, and the king of Bohemia). Charles V was crowned by the pope, but his successors were not. The position gave Charles heavy additional obligations, which were not offset by similar advantages. As a result of his imperial responsibilities he was continually drawn into German affairs, but his influence here was curtailed by the opposition of local and regional authorities, jealous of their privileges. Moreover, the fact that the emperor held large non-German territories limited his ability to stand as a symbol of German unity or to bring the states closer together. This situation was to the interest of the German princes, but it contributed to a delay of German national consolidation and thus made it more difficult for the area to withstand intervention by outside powers.

The position of Holy Roman Emperor, with its combination of religious and secular obligations, made it inevitable that Charles V would be a major figure in the controversies of the Reformation. In 1517, two years before Charles came to the throne, Martin Luther posted the Ninety-Five Theses on the door of the church in Wittenberg, thereby challenging the Catholic authorities. Charles and his successors, although deeply aware of their responsibilities toward the church, were not always obedient servants of the papacy and were often in conflict with it. The religious disputes also had a profound political significance, since Protestant doctrines appealed strongly to those German rulers who favored feudal decentralization or who wanted to confiscate church lands.

The intertwining of religious questions with power politics was to damage further the ability of Habsburg rulers to control German events. In the Peace of Augsburg of 1555 the German princes won the right to decide their religion and that of their subjects, thus weakening the imperial tie. When Charles V abdicated in 1556, the Habsburg family lands, which had already proved too extensive to govern from a single center (see Map 1), were finally divided. Philip II (1556-1598) received the more valuable share: Spain with its dependent lands in America, the Italian possessions, and the Netherlands. For the next years the Spanish court was the true center of Habsburg family power. Ferdinand I (1556-1604) was given the Austrian Hereditary Lands, the Bohemian and Hungarian heritage, and he became Holy Roman Emperor. As before, the Austrian provinces were ruled by archdukes. Despite the division of its territories the House of Habsburg retained a strong internal unity. Family relations were close between the Spanish and Austrian branches.

Although Charles V surrendered to some Protestant demands in Germany, Catholicism remained supreme within the family lands despite the early successes of the Reformation in certain areas. After around 1570 the Counter-Reformation took hold in most Habsburg territories, but it did not eradicate Protestantism everywhere. Indeed, the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) commenced in Bohemia with a rebellion involving Catholic-Protestant antagonisms made complicated by political issues. The imperial victory at the Battle of White Mountain (1620) enabled Ferdinand II (1619-1637) to take over the Bohemian lands as a hereditary kingdom. Rebellious Protestant noble landowners were forced to emigrate and were replaced by Catholics, some of German but others of Spanish, Dutch, Italian, Scottish, or Irish descent. In the next years a large number of loyal state officials were to come from this group. Although the period of warfare resulted in the victory of the Catholic church in the Habsburg lands, the Peace of Westphalia (1648) was a further blow to the influence of the emperor and the unity of the German lands. Habsburg control over the family possessions was, however, strengthened.

In foreign affairs, Habsburg monarchs, either as kings of Spain or as Holy Roman Emperors, had to face severe challenges from France to the west and the Ottoman Empire to the east, powers that were sometimes in alliance. Despite the convinced Catholicism of the French rulers, they showed little hesitation in cooperating with Protestant Germans or the Muslim Ottoman Empire when it served state interests. The greatest threat to Habsburg lands came during the reign of Louis XIV (1643-1715), when that monarch attempted to achieve what he defined as France's "natural frontiers" on the Rhine, and at the Alps and the Pyrenees. The Ottoman threat remained almost constant throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Under the leadership of Suleiman the Magnificent, Ottoman armies reached as far as Vienna at the end of September 1529, but the siege was broken in October. Although the Ottoman front remained relatively quiet during the Thirty Years' War, a revival of activity occurred after 1660. In July 1683 Ottoman armies under the command of Grand Vizir Kara Mustafa again besieged Vienna. With the aid of Polish forces and some German troops, the imperial army was able to lift the siege in September. Thereafter, the monarchy joined Venice and Russia in a counter-offensive, which by 1687 had taken most of the Hungarian lands. In 1699 the Habsburg and Ottoman governments signed the Treaty of Karlowitz (Sremski Karlovci), the most important agreement ever negotiated between the two states. This pact established a common boundary, which, with the exception of the Habsburg annexation of the Banat in 1718 and Bukovina in 1775, was to last until 1878. Not only was the eastern border established at this
time, but as a result of the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714), other lasting changes were made in the composition of the territories under Habsburg rule. With the death of Charles II in 1700 the Habsburg line in Spain came to an end. The attempt of Louis XIV to place a Bourbon ruler on the throne involved the European powers in another long period of warfare, at the end of which the Spanish inheritance was divided in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). Although a Bourbon king was indeed to rule in Madrid, the Habsburg Monarchy received as compensation the Spanish Netherlands (Belgium), Sardinia, and important territory in Italy, including Milan, Mantua, and Mirandola.

Despite the division of Habsburg lands during the reign of Charles V, a move taken in the interest of administrative efficiency, little else had been done toward facing the problem of organizing and defending scattered lands with differing national compositions and historic traditions. As we have seen, the Habsburg possessions had been acquired through marriage, war, or chance. Each area had retained its traditional system, or it had been assigned a Habsburg administrator. No great imperial institutions had been developed that could bring the Habsburg lands under a common system. At the time that the Treaty of Utrecht added the Italian and Flemish lands to the monarchy, the Habsburg Empire consisted of three major divisions: first, the Hereditary Lands, comprising primarily the provinces of Vorarlberg, Styria, Upper and Lower Austria, Carniola, and Carinthia, together with the scattered German possessions known as the Vorlande; second, the Kingdom of Bohemia (also known as the Lands of the Crown of St. Wenceslas), including Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia; and third, the Kingdom of Hungary (or the Lands of the Crown of St. Stephen). Included in the Hungarian heritage, in addition to Hungarian lands, were two distinct areas, Transylvania and the Kingdom of Croatia, known before the Ottoman conquest as the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia.

Since no attempt had been made to establish a uniform administrative system, and since most regions maintained their historic political organizations, the major link connecting the Habsburg possessions was the person of the ruler. However, despite his apparently exalted position and his great personal prestige, the emperor had, in fact, only limited powers. His most important duties were linked to foreign affairs and the military; he could declare war, make peace, and sign treaties and alliances. Here the emperor did indeed have autocratic powers. Nevertheless, even in these matters there were limits on his effectiveness. Although he was supreme commander of the armed forces, he had to rely for the most part on the provincial diets for recruits and the tax money needed to pay them. In fact, the limited financial resources available to the emperor weakened his power in almost all areas of government. Imperial administrative officers had the right to collect some taxes, such as customs dues. There was also the Habsburg family wealth and possessions, but these resources were usually so badly administered that they did not yield an adequate income.

With this situation it is easy to understand why major state functions rested in the hands of the nobility and why this estate was so powerful. It was in fact this group that was in close relationship with and had effective control over the mass of the population. As lords of their manors the nobles had direct authority over the peasants on their estates; they administered justice and provided what social services there were. As members of the provincial diets the nobles decided the political affairs of their regions, and, as previously mentioned, they voted the taxes and recruits needed by the monarch. They also held the high church and state posts, and they served as the diplomats and army officers. Their special privileges, which differed in various parts of the empire, included the right to pay taxes at a reduced rate or not at all. They could be tried only by their equals, and they had no set military obligations.

Like the other social divisions, the noble estate was ex-tremely varied in character throughout the empire. Those of noble birth could control vast estates or small or medium farms, or they could be landless. They could be of noble lin-eage for many generations or newcomers who were advanced in status as a reward for service to the court. There were, of course, countless divisions in between. Important for Habsburg authority was the large group of service nobility, many of whom were of foreign background. The origin of the new nobility in Bohemia after the Battle of White Mountain has been noted. Over the years the Habsburg court retained the services of able men from all over Europe. This multinational group and the native service nobility constituted a strong support for the central authority, especially when confronting local interests with deep roots in their home provinces.

The great majority of the population consisted of enserfed peasants. In the Alpine regions, notably in Tirol, there were free peasant households, but most peasants were tied to the land and subject to heavy taxation in kind, money, and labor. This group provided financial support to the nobility and the central government and recruits for the army. Subject to the will of the local nobility, the peasantry had little contact with representatives of the central administration. Most estates were economically self-sufficient, with the individual peasant family producing enough to satisfy its own needs and to pay the required dues to the lord, the church, and the state.

The relatively small intermediate class of merchants, artisans, and professional men lived in towns and cities, some of which had considerable rights of self-government. Merchants and artisans were organized into guilds that supplied the local market. At this time the cities, like the state as a whole,
suffered because the Habsburg central lands lay outside the main routes of trade; the one major European road in the Hereditary Lands ran through Tirol and linked the German and Italian lands. The repeated wars and the presence of rapacious armies on Habsburg soil had also drained the economy and disrupted normal trade relations in many regions.

THE BAROQUE AGE

Despite the past fluctuations of fortune, by the end of the seventeenth century the Habsburg leaders had much about which to congratulate themselves. Not only had the monarchy maintained itself as a great power against assaults from east and west, but the Catholic church, closely associated with the state, had emerged triumphant in the Habsburg lands. The court, the church, and the nobility celebrated their accomplishments with the adoption of lavish and outwardly extravagant ways of life, which were best expressed in the large-scale building of the period. The Baroque building style, imported from Rome, fitted well with the spirit of the time - its aim was to combine religious piety with worldly grandeur. Its art and architecture paid tribute to saints, military heroes, and Habsburg rulers alike. It dominated the reigns of Leopold I (1658-1705), Joseph I (1705-1711), and Charles VI (1711-1740).

The construction in Vienna was particularly impressive. The second siege of Vienna had caused massive damage; the city's suburbs were in ruins. After the signing of the Treaty of Karlowitz, when the threat of further Ottoman raids appeared ended, the way was clear for a rebuilding program. Moreover, there was now little hesitation about constructing large and expensive buildings outside the city walls. Although the Italian influence remained strong, three native artists created what have remained until today Viennese and Austrian landmarks. Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656-1723) is perhaps best known for the design of the Karlskirche, built as the result of a vow taken by Charles VI during the plague year of 1713. Fischer also commenced work on the palace of Schonbrunn, which was supposed to outshine Versailles; it was finished by his son, Johann Lukas von Hildebrandt (1668-1745), among other buildings, designed the splendid Belvedere Palace for Prince Eugene of Savoy, the most famous Habsburg military hero of this time. The third important architect, Jakob Prandtauer (1660-1727), directed the rebuilding of the Benedictine Abbey at Melk, situated on the Danube River about fifty miles west of Vienna, and the completion of the work on the Abbey of St. Florian.

Although the greatest achievements of Austrian Baroque were in architecture, interior decoration was also a major concern of the time. Artists and sculptors provided rich ornamentation to the new churches and buildings, using themes from history, religion, and classical civilization. The court, the church, and the aristocracy were patrons of all aspects of Baroque art. Not only did they support the elaborate building program, but emperors, clergy, and nobility alike collected paintings, statuary, and tapestries; their residences were conspicuous for their rich and elegant furnishings.

In this atmosphere, theater and music naturally flourished. Opera was in great favor, since it combined music, dance, drama, and spectacle. Music held a special position at court; Ferdinand III (1637-1657), Leopold I, and Joseph I were all composers. In general, Italian and French imports predominated, but an Austrian composer, Johann Josef Fux (1660-1741), wrote masses, operas, and oratorios for the court and the church. He was also the author of one of the most famous treatises on counterpoint, Gradus ad Parnassum (1725).

Baroque as a style fitted only an aristocratic culture. It was also expensive to maintain. As long as the patrons could afford the cost, building programs could be continued. Soon, however, the immense burden of continual warfare, joined to domestic crises, caused a halting or a modification of plans. Moreover, tastes changed with time; Schonbrunn was completed, for instance, in the lighter Rococo style. The Baroque period was the great age of Habsburg architecture. At the beginning of the twentieth century another important school was to emerge, but without similar imperial and historical associations.

ENLIGHTENED DESPOTISM: MARIA THERESA AND JOSEPH II

The eighteenth century, a period of almost continual warfare, was to witness the adoption of a series of reforms, whose nature was to shape the character of the monarchy until its downfall. Dangerous developments in foreign affairs at this time made it clear that changes would have to be made so that the state would be strong enough to meet challenges from abroad. After the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 the next major threat came not so much from the traditional opponent, France, as from a German power, Prussia. Moreover, despite the decisive Treaty of Karlowitz, the monarchy was at war with the Ottoman Empire in the years 1716-1718, 1737-1739, and 1788-1791. At the end of the century, with the commencement of the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon, France once again became the main enemy.

That major changes in the organization of the monarchy were essential was made clear during the reign of Charles VI (1711-1740) when it became apparent that the male line of the family was threatened with extinction. Fearing a partition of the Austrian lands and a fate similar to that suffered by Spain with the demise of the dynasty there, Charles in 1713 proclaimed the Pragmatic Sanction, a document which declared that the Habsburg lands were indivisible and hereditary in both the male and the female line. This arrangement was in fact the first legally binding document that was applied
equally in all the lands of the monarchy. At first it was issued as a family compact, but after his only son died at a young age, Charles sought its acceptance by the provincial diets and foreign governments. Although his estates agreed to it, the Hungarian diet did so only after forcing him to recognize the special position of that kingdom in the Habsburg domain.

In 1740 Charles was thus succeeded by his daughter, Maria Theresa (1740-1780), who was twenty-four years old when she came to the throne. In 1736 she married Francis Stephen of Lorraine; the name of the dynasty became thereafter the House of Habsburg-Lorraine. In 1745 Stephen was elected Holy Roman Emperor. In nineteen years the couple had sixteen children. The empress had not been trained for her position, since as long as her father was alive there was a chance that he would have a son. She, nevertheless, had excellent advisers, and she was to prove herself an able ruler. When her husband died in 1765, her son, Joseph II (1780-1790), became coregent and Holy Roman Emperor.

Immediately upon her accession the weak position of the Habsburg lands was clearly demonstrated. Despite the agreements that they had made with Charles VI recognizing the Pragmatic Sanction, the monarchy's avaricious neighbors at once took advantage of the situation. Prussia, under the leadership of Frederick the Great, immediately seized Silesia and thus started the War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748); France, Spain, Saxony, and Bavaria subsequently joined the Prussian side. In this crisis the monarchy found itself virtually isolated, although some support came from other German states, and Britain provided subsidies. In a desperate situation, Maria Theresa had to appeal to the estates for soldiers and money; once again assistance was not obtained without further concessions to Hungarian particularism. The war ended with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which confirmed the Prussian possession of Silesia. In the next year, identifying Prussia as the prime enemy, the empress and her foreign minister, Wenzel von Kaunitz, prepared to avenge this defeat. In a diplomatic revolution that ended the previous Austrian-French antagonism, the two states in May 1756 signed the Treaty of Versailles; in the same year Prussia allied with Britain. Thus in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) Austria and France, joined by Russia, fought against Prussia and Britain. Despite his often dangerous situation, Frederick was able in the final peace to retain almost all of Silesia, a rich province that was to add immeasurably to Prussian strength.

The two wars over Silesia were to have important consequences for the monarchy. First, Prussia was henceforth to emerge ever more strongly as a challenger to the previous Habsburg primacy in the German lands. Second, the loss of the predominantly German-populated Silesia was to shift the balance of the population in the Bohemian kingdom in favor of the Czech inhabitants, a change whose repercussions were not to be clearly felt for almost a century.

Although the monarchy surrendered Silesia to Prussia, gains were made in other areas. From the Ottoman Empire Austria acquired the Banat in 1718 and Bukovina in 1775. After the War of Bavarian Succession (1778-1779) the Inn Quarter was annexed. Even more important, Austria participated with Prussia and Russia in 1772 and 1795 in two of the three partitions of Poland. The newly acquired territory, with a Polish and Ruthenian population, was organized as a province under the name of the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, with a governor and a diet in Lvov. The wars of the eighteenth century thus altered the ethnic composition of the monarchy, in that a large German population was lost whereas the numbers of Poles, Ruthenians, and Romanians were increased.

As significant as the acquisitions of land were the great reforms inaugurated in the reign of Maria Theresa and completed by Joseph II. An Austrian historian has aptly summed up their importance for the future: "A study of any aspect of modern Austrian history - public administration, finance or economic policy, public education, military organization, jurisprudence, or public health - leads to the inevitable conclusion that the most energetic reforms and the most beneficent institutions date back to the reign of the great Empress."1

Like their contemporaries Frederick the Great and Catherine the Great, Maria Theresa and, in particular, her son were influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment. As other Enlightened Despots did, they believed that it was their duty as monarchs to devote their lives to the service and betterment of the condition of their subjects. The state and state power were to be used as instruments to achieve social progress through direct intervention in the lives of the people. It was not a democratic age: the principle of everything for the people but nothing by the people predominated. The aim was to change the system, previously described, whereby the monarch ruled in conjunction with a nobility that had control over the peasants under its jurisdiction. The reforms were designed to overthrow this feudal structure and to insert the state and its agents between the noble and peasant and above both; the majority of the population would therefore be under direct central supervision. The position of the noble would indeed be curtailed, but he could serve in the bureaucracy and in other state institutions. Although the age of reform was inaugurated to enable the state to meet the Prussian challenge, the measures themselves were similar to those adopted in Prussia.

The first reforms, undertaken during the reign of Maria Theresa and then

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continued during her joint rule with her son, resulted in changes in the administrative and legal systems and in the relationship of church and state, as well as measures to aid the peasantry. The administrative acts, which were not applied in Hungary, Belgium, or the Italian lands, were aimed at placing the Hereditary and Bohemian lands under the control of a centralized bureaucracy and thus limiting the activities of the diets. The legal reforms were in the same direction, with the first changes enacted in 1769. In 1787 a general penal code was issued that eliminated the application of the death penalty. The laws reflected the ideas of the age in accepting the principle that equal punishments would be applied for equal crimes no matter what the social status of the convicted was.

In the church reforms Maria Theresa followed what had become a Habsburg tradition of favoring state control over those aspects of religious life that did not strictly involve doctrine. A devout Catholic, she, like previous Habsburg monarchs, was convinced that the dynasty had a special mission and that she was directly responsible to God for its fulfillment. A major problem at this time was the church’s domination of education. With the reforms it was clear that the schools would have to undertake new tasks, such as, for instance, the training of bureaucrats. The opportunity to establish a state system was offered in 1773 when the pope abolished the Jesuit order, which had been very influential in Austrian education. Following this example Maria Theresa seized the property of the order and used the income to provide secular schooling. Henceforth, elementary education was in theory at least to be available for all Austrian citizens.

Both Maria Theresa and Joseph II were concerned about the condition of the serfdom peasants, which provided both taxes and soldiers. Under Maria Theresa’s rule an attempt was made to establish a uniform system governing the relationship of the peasant and the noble and to obtain a clear statement of peasant obligations. The principle of state intervention between the peasant and his overlord was thus established.

After his mother’s death Joseph II continued the reforms, but in a more radical direction. Both he and his brother Leopold II were convinced adherents of the ideals of the Enlightenment. Both considered themselves primarily servants of the state, justifying their high position not by the principle of divine right, the basis of absolute monarchy, but by their assigned task of bettering the condition of their people. Well aware of the wretched condition of many of the enserfed peasants, Joseph felt an obligation to work especially for the interest of this class. In his administrative reforms he showed his dislike of feudal privilege and the accompanying provincial autonomous rights. During his reign he did not convene the diets, and he refused to be crowned separately, as was customary, in Hungary and Bohemia. Instead he organized a centralized administrative system in the Hungarian kingdom; its lands, including Transylvania and Croatia, were divided into ten regions. His actions trod on local aristocratic sensibilities not only because he revoked traditional privileges, but also because his centralized bureaucracy used German as the official language. This issue was to become a major point of dispute in the next century in the nationality conflicts.

In his religious reforms Joseph went even further than his mother in asserting state control over religious institutions. In a major move he dissolved over seven hundred convents and monasteries that did not provide social services, such as medicine or education. He used the money acquired from this action for charitable purposes or to build new churches in areas where a sufficient number did not exist. His great measure, however, was the Toleration Patent of October 1781. According to its terms, Lutherans, Calvinists, and certain other Protestant sects, as well as Orthodox citizens, were to be free to exercise their religion and to build churches. They could also hold state offices. At the same time some measures that restricted the Jews were removed.

Joseph’s greatest achievement was the abolition of serfdom. The Serfdom Patent of 1781 freed the peasants except in the Hungarian lands; soon similar measures were enacted there too. The Austrian peasants thus no longer suffered from assignment to a hereditary servile status; they could marry, (change their professions, or leave the land, if they had replacements, without the lord’s permission. They still, however, had to pay dues for the use of the land. Joseph would have liked to introduce reforms here too. However, his radical plans to replace the many taxes and payments still collected from the peasant with a single sum could not be implemented before his death in 1790.

As well as in these specific reforms, the firm directing hand of the central government was also felt in general economic planning. The mercantilist policies adopted under both Maria Theresa and Joseph II resembled those followed by the other great powers and did not cause controversies similar to those aroused by the previously described changes. Like the reforms, the economic measures were designed to promote the general welfare, but most significantly to prepare the state for war. At this time it was believed that these goals could be best achieved through economic self-sufficiency and the adoption of commercial policies that would result in a surplus of exports over imports. A favorable balance of trade was expected to bring an inflow of gold, which could in turn be used for armaments or other expenditures that would increase state power. This program obviously called for state direction and measures to improve the domestic economy. Of first importance was the abolition of barriers to domestic trade. Almost all internal tariffs were eliminated in most of the Hereditary Lands and Bohemia by 1775 and in the
Hungarian kingdom by 1784. The division between Hungary and the rest of the monarchy lasted, however, until 1851. Whereas measures were taken to foster trade within the monarchy, great efforts were made to protect domestic interests from foreign competition through high tariffs, quotas, and some prohibitions on the import of certain goods.

Another series of measures was adopted that was to have a lasting influence on internal development. With a clear program for the future of their country, the Habsburg officials expected that the eastern regions would be the chief source for food and raw materials to supply the manufacturing centers, which would be concentrated in certain areas in the west. This attitude meant that early industrial development occurred chiefly in the Alpine lands, in the region around Vienna, and in Bohemia and Moravia. The government gave loans and tax exemptions to those nobles who wished to establish workshops on their estates and to middle-class businessmen; it also supported efforts to lure skilled workers from abroad with the promise of high wages and good housing. The textile industry, producing wool, cotton, and linen cloth, became of first importance in Bohemia, Moravia, and Vienna. The Alpine regions, particularly Styria and Carinthia, produced iron and steel products, such as cutlery and basic farm implements. Although this period marked only the weak beginnings of industrialization, the Austrian economy was advanced for its time. In 1767, for example, Styria produced as much pig iron as England.

Despite the advancements made in the reform era and the popularity of many of the changes, particularly those accomplished during the reign of Maria Theresa, the radical nature of many of Joseph's measures caused such a strong reaction that he not only had to stop further action, but also had to withdraw some of his controversial enactments. At the end of his reign his Belgian lands were in revolt, Hungary was on the edge of rebellion, and there was widespread dissatisfaction with his rule. Nevertheless, his two great acts, the Toleration and Serfdom patents, remained as lasting monuments to his rule. His successor, his brother Leopold II (1790-1792), shared Joseph's enlightened goals, but a greater sense of political realism induced him to accept further retreats. He thus, for instance, reinstated the previous administrative organization of Hungary, so that the diet resumed its former authority. When Leopold died suddenly at the age of forty-five, the reform era came to an end.

Leopold was succeeded by his son Francis (1792-1835). The first period of his reign was dominated by the repeated disasters occasioned by the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon. Soon after his accession he had to face the shock of the execution of his brother-in-law, Louis XVI, in January 1793, followed by that of his sister, Marie Antoinette, in October. Over the next years Austrian armies were repeatedly defeated by the French Army, and Habsburg territory was partitioned to French advantage. Moreover, the revolutionary ideas associated with France at this time went far beyond anything ever advocated by Joseph II and did indeed endanger the social order in the monarchy. The threats to Austrian possessions, to the social and political order, and to the Habsburg family scared most of the Austrian citizenry.

No attempt will be made here to describe the complicated events of over a quarter century of revolution and war. For future Habsburg history, however, two major changes occurred. First, in reordering the map of Europe Napoleon made significant alterations in the political organization of the German states. In July 1806, with the formation of the Confederation of the Rhine, about three hundred political jurisdictions in Germany were abolished. At the end of the fighting, thirty-nine states remained, of which four were free cities. Second, in May 1804 Napoleon made himself emperor in France. Foreseeing the inevitable loss of his position as Holy Roman Emperor, Francis in the same year assumed the title of emperor of Austria. After the formation of the Confederation of the Rhine, the medieval association was indeed brought to an end.

Despite its bad military record previously, the monarchy joined in the great coalition with other European powers in the final campaign against Napoleon. In March 1814 the victorious allies entered Paris, thus ending the long series of wars that had dominated European international relations during the previous century. The new era began with peace negotiations, held in Vienna, that were to create a territorial and political situation in Europe to the Habsburg advantage.

Although much of Habsburg history had in the previous century been dominated by warfare, it was the reform period that was to be most significant for the future of the state. Serfdom had been abolished, although some problems connected with it remained. A modern administrative system with an efficient, educated bureaucracy had been introduced in the Hereditary Lands and Bohemia. The legal system, placing all citizens on the same level, was one of the best in Europe. The assertion of state control over the church and the establishment of a secular school system were also steps forward. Most important was the recognition of the principle that the state could and should intervene to protect certain classes of the population from exploitation from others and to offer basic social services. This attitude was to become an attribute of Austrian government even after the dissolution of the empire.

1  THE AUSTRIAN EMPIRE, 1815-1867
The Congress of Vienna, which met from September 1814 to June 1815, resulted in a European settlement that was to lay the groundwork for a long period of peace. Another period of massive conflict, involving all of the great powers, was not to come until 1914. In the treaty some adjustments were made in the territory under Habsburg control (see Map 2). No attempt was made to retain the Austrian Netherlands and scattered German territory that had been lost during the war. However, Dalmatia, Venetia, Istria, and Salzburg, which had been held intermittently in the previous years, were now annexed. Some Polish territory was given up and Cracow was made a free city, but the major portion of the Galician acquisitions remained under Habsburg jurisdiction. The settlement reached in regard to the German and Italian lands was particularly advantageous to the monarchy. No attempt was made to revive the Holy Roman Empire or the multitude of prewar political jurisdictions. Instead a new organization, the German Confederation, joined the German states together. The Habsburg Empire and Prussia were given controlling positions, with Austria assigned the permanent presidency. The confederation also had a diet, which met in Frankfurt, composed of envoys instructed by the German princes. This weak union was empowered to send and receive ambassadors and to make war and sign treaties. This arrangement placed the former territories of the Holy Roman Empire under the dual control of the two great powers, but also gave the smaller states of Germany some protection. The Italian peninsula was similarly organized in a manner favorable to Habsburg interests. Venetia was joined with the new acquisition of Lombardy to form the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia. The Italian states, with the exception of Piedmont-Sardinia, all had rulers who were either Habsburg relatives, as in Tuscany and Modena, or friendly allies, such as the Bourbon ruler of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the pope for the Papal States. Parma was given to Francis’s daughter, Maria Louisa, who had been married to Napoleon for a brief period.

At the conclusion of the conference the monarchy signed two general treaties. The first, the Quadruple Alliance, joined Austria with Britain, Russia, and Prussia in an agreement designed to protect the peace settlement and to guard against renewed French aggression. The second, the Holy Alliance, a pet scheme of Tsar Alexander I, was simply a declaration that the European rulers would conduct their policy according to Christian principles. Although this document had many signatories, only Alexander took it seriously. In later years the term Holy Alliance was used to designate the close alignment of Austria, Russia, and Prussia in international affairs.

CONSERVATIVE RULE: THE AGE OF METTERNICH

With the defeat of Napoleon and the negotiation of a stable peace settlement, the long period of stress and turmoil that had threatened not only the Habsburg government, but also the social and political system, came to an end. Throughout the Habsburg lands, as in Europe in general, there came a relaxation of tension, accompanied by a feeling of fatigue and a desire for stability: the Napoleonic age was over. In such circumstances Francis I was not ill fitted for his position. A plain man with an unassuming manner, but a strong sense of duty, he certainly had no dreams of imperial expansion or glory; military affairs did not interest him. Moreover, Francis “the Good” had habits that were appealing in an age of quiet and comfort. Court life was kept simple. The emperor gave audiences freely and walked unescorted in the city parks of Vienna. His convictions and manner of life won him the approval of those who, like himself, wanted to keep everything in Austria as it was.

The rest of Francis’s reign was certainly not a period of revolutionary striving or heroic activity. The Biedermeier period, whose name came from that of a fictional schoolteacher, reflected the recognition among much of the population of the joys of peace and the moderate prosperity of the time. It was an age that placed an emphasis on simple pleasures, on family life, and on comfort and happiness. Influenced by the Romantic movement, Austrians became deeply interested in the natural world and came to appreciate the beauty of their spectacular Alpine regions. Reflecting the preferences of what was a middle-class as well as an aristocratic clientele, artists produced, in particular, landscape paintings, such as those by Georg Waldmuller, and miniatures and lithographs, often endowed with a picturesque or sentimental quality. Biedermeier furniture, a modified version of Napoleonic imperial styles, reflected the values of simplicity, comfort, and quiet beauty.

The reign of Francis I marked the end of Enlightened Despotism and radical reform, but it was not a period of intense repression. There was, however, certainly a reaction against the ideas of the French Revolution, which had been spread as a result of Napoleon’s conquests. The major reforms remained, but the spirit in which they were administered changed. This modification was caused in part by the shift in the attitude of the aristocracy toward the court. Joseph II, it will be remembered, had attacked the special position of the nobility and had attempted to break down the historic privileges not only of this class, but of regions such as the Hungarian kingdom. During his reign the nobility thus tended to be in opposition to the central government. The French Revolution affected the attitudes of both parties. The external and internal dangers showed the court and the nobility, closely attached to the provincial diets, that they needed each other. The centralists and those who wished to defend local historic rights thus learned to cooperate; the central government institutions came to act more often in the interest of the aristocracy. The feudal estates society was not restored, but the conservative direction of government
policy appeared to guarantee the maintenance of the aristocratic privileges that remained.

The determination of the government to keep conditions as they were and to prevent the influx of revolutionary ideas was backed by positive actions. The school system was used to indoctrinate proper attitudes; the church aided in this task. Censorship and police interference, which had also been a part of life under Joseph II, remained. Although the offices of repression were in place, they were in fact seldom used in a drastic manner. Although prior censorship of publications was extremely annoying to writers and newspaper publishers, and the existence of controls undoubtedly repressed and discouraged literary activity, these measures were not accompanied by obvious outward violence. There were also no political trials during the last twenty years of Francis's reign.

Although the Habsburg Empire was served by a large bureaucracy, there were no adequate central offices. The emperor alone was in a position to survey the work of all the departments and to make the basic decisions. To meet the demands of his office, Francis worked very hard. Leopold II had seventeen children, so there were always archdukes available for state service. In addition to the members of his family, Francis relied chiefly on two able ministers – Count Franz Anton Kolowrat and Clemens von Metternich, two men who usually disagreed on fundamental questions. Kolowrat was especially effective in internal administration; in fact, until 1848 he exerted the major influence over domestic affairs. A great Bohemian landowner, with some liberal ideas, he objected to many points in Metternich's foreign policy. He opposed, for instance, an active involvement in affairs that would require large expenditures on the army. During his period in office the Habsburg armed forces declined in strength and effectiveness. A centralist in administration, he disagreed with Metternich's conception of the proper organization of the monarchy.

The dominant figure in Austrian history at this time and one of the greatest European statesmen of any period, Metternich gave his name to the era. Born in Coblenz in the Rhineland in May 1773, Metternich, like his father, entered Austrian state service. Rising fast in the diplomatic corps, he became ambassador to France in 1806 and came to know Napoleon well. In 1809, when the monarchy was in a condition of demoralization and defeat, he became foreign minister. Attempting at first to appease the French conqueror, he negotiated the marriage of Maria Louisa and then tried to exploit the relationship. In August 1813 he brought Austria into the final coalition against France. The Austrian Army thus fought in the decisive Battle of the Nations at Leipzig in October 1813. After the victory Metternich presided over and was a major influence at the Congress of Vienna; the settlement reached there reflected many of his views. As a representative of the generation of the aristocracy that had been most deeply injured by the French wars, he too believed that the revolutionary doctrines of liberty and equality would inevitably lead to internal and foreign disasters.

At the Vienna conference Metternich strongly supported the restoration of the balance of power and the maintenance in many cases of changes accomplished during the Napoleonic period as the best way to preserve order. His attitude was clearly shown in his program for the German area. He made no attempt to restore the Holy Roman Empire, and he accepted the secularization and mediatization that had been accomplished under French direction. He, however, wanted national consolidation to go no further, although a certain measure of federal unity among monarchial states under Habsburg leadership was acceptable to him, a condition that he achieved with the formation of the German Confederation. In Germany, as in the Habsburg Monarchy, he could thus be called a federalist. He was also quite willing to allow Prussia an important role in German affairs, especially in programs to prevent revolutionary activity in Central Europe. In this endeavor, and to preserve the Vienna settlement, he favored the cooperation of the five great powers.

Despite the major role that Metternich played in foreign affairs, his influence within the government was limited. Although the final years of Francis's reign were in general a peaceful period, a problem did arise over the question of succession. The eldest son, Ferdinand, was epileptic and retarded. Since the heir was under his influence, Metternich nevertheless stood strongly by the hereditary principle. When Francis died in February 1835, Ferdinand (1835-1848) did indeed become emperor, but the power in the government was placed in the hands of a State Conference, appointed in December 1836. Although Ferdinand was supposed to preside over this body, his duties were taken over by his uncle, Archduke Ludwig. Ferdinand's brother, Archduke Franz Karl, Metternich, and Kolowrat were all members of the State Conference. Ferdinand's inability to fulfill the obligations of his office was damaging to Austrian imperial interests; the absolute monarchy was now without a functioning monarch.

Meanwhile, despite the political stalemate, life was changing, and most important, the influences of the new industrial age were becoming apparent. The late 1820s to 1840s were marked by continuing and even accelerating progress in exactly those areas whose beginnings in the eighteenth century have been previously noted. However, unlike the situation in the mercantile age, the government did not act to further industrial progress. Francis and his advisors could not be expected to support developments that might upset the internal order. Nevertheless, the textile in dustry continued to expand, with the centers still in Bohemia, Moravia, and the Vienna region. Machinery, often
imported from England, was used for cotton and wool spinning. Iron and steel production increased, particularly in the Alpine regions, but the lack of convenient coal supplies hampered its development.

The period also witnessed rapid improvements in transportation, most notably the building of railroads. Here the government did take a leading role, since it quickly understood the military and economic significance of an adequate rail system. Both state and private capital were involved in financing the railroads, but a decree of 1841 established that the government would have the deciding voice in planning. Austria, in fact, had the first continental European railroad. In 1832 a horse-drawn train was in operation between Budweis (České Budějovice) and Linz, a distance of about seventy-eight miles. Vienna was and remained the center of the railroad network. In a parallel development, the government concerned itself with the improvement of roads and canals. In this period steam navigation began on the Austrian rivers; in 1829 the Danube Steamship Company (Donau dampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft or DDSG) was founded, which was to play a major role in the commercial life of the river.

With the growth in industry, the working class naturally increased in size and significance. In Austria, as elsewhere, early industrialization was accompanied by bad working conditions. Long hours, crowded housing, and low pay were the rule. The urban population also rose: Vienna grew from a city of over two hundred thousand in 1780 to one of more than four hundred thousand around the middle of the century. Nevertheless, the monarchy remained a basically agricultural country; in 1846 about 74 percent of the population was engaged in farming or related occupations, with just under 17 percent in industry and mining.

The heavy emphasis on agriculture made it important that conditions in the countryside be satisfactory. However, neither the noble landowners nor the peasants were happy with the situation. The reforms of the eighteenth century had given the peasant personal freedom, but not land. He objected in particular to the continuation of the heavy labor service, the robot, which he owed in return for the use of his plot of land. Many progressive landlords also desired a new system; they wished to follow in the path of their counterparts in Britain and Prussia and organize their estates as producing units, employing farm laborers and introducing scientific improvements. In general, the nobles too wanted the robot replaced; they, however, wished to be indemnified in cash. The peasant, without monetary resources, and the landlord both looked to the government to arrange a new relationship.

By the 1840s the peasantry was faced with additional problems. The rural population was growing, but the industrial development was not adequate to absorb the excess. Payments and taxes rose during the century, but agricultural prices did not show a similar increase. By this time also the individual peasant had lost his faith in the system; he did not believe that God had placed him in a subservient position and that he should accept his lot. He was now more willing to adopt aggressive and violent measures to achieve his major goal: the full possession of the land he worked.

Whereas the grievances of the peasants were closely tied to their economic and social disabilities, other sections of the population wanted political reform. Two great revolutionary ideologies, liberalism and nationalism, both with their origins in the time of the French Revolution, continued to attract passionate adherents. The Austrian middle class - composed of merchants, manufacturers, artisans, bureaucrats, and those in professions, including lawyers, doctors, and teachers - was particularly attracted to liberal doctrines. Since members of this class were primarily German-speaking, they felt few national pressures. They did, however, suffer from the consequences of inefficient government and state regulation. Moreover, they had access to books, papers, and pamphlets propagating revolutionary ideologies. Austrian censorship was never particularly effective; it was difficult to deny access to foreign books to an educated middle class. The more politically involved of this group became extremely attracted to the standard liberal program of the era. The emphasis was on political reform with the goal of establishing constitutional government, including representative institutions that would give the taxpayer some control over public expenditures and a voice in the formulation of national policy. Liberals were not democrats; they usually favored a franchise with strict property or tax qualifications. In addition, they also supported the adoption of a standard program of civil liberties, including the guarantee of the right to free speech, assembly, and an uncensored press. They also supported agricultural reform and the end of robot services, not only for ideological reasons, but because they knew that an efficient farming system would ensure the availability of cheap food. The city working class had similar interests. The adoption of the liberal program would cause major modifications in Habsburg political institutions, but it did not call for a basic social or economic revolution.

If liberalism appealed to some elements of the middle class, nationalism was bound to attract adherents among the politically active, non-German people, particularly among the Hungarians. As we have seen, in the past the Hungarian nobles had consistently fought for an autonomous relationship with Vienna and what they defined as their historical rights. Hungarian nationalism at this time showed some new features, which reflected current nationalist ideology. In the nineteenth century language became one of the major criteria to determine national identity. In 1843 the Hungarian diet replaced Latin with Hungarian as the official language to be used in administration and education.
in the lands of the kingdom. This measure affected adversely the non-Hungarian nationalities, who made up half the population. In addition, radical Hungarian liberal leaders called for a reorganization of the monarchy, with the Hungarian crown-lands, including Transylvania and Croatia, organized as a centralized, autonomous state, which would then be joined only by weak links to the rest of the monarchy. Hungarian liberals thus called for major changes in the state structure, and they supported many of the same political ideals as did their German and Italian counterparts.

Although no revolutionary movements disturbed Austrian domestic tranquility before the middle of the century, Metternich in foreign relations was forced to deal with a series of revolts in the German and Italian lands, where direct Habsburg interests were involved and where liberalism and nationalism were indeed revolutionary ideals. He was able to control the situation and to manipulate events primarily because he could work closely with Tsars Alexander I (1801-1825) and Nicholas I (1825-1855) and with the Prussian king, Frederick William III (1797-1840). Joined together in the Holy Alliance, the conservative rulers accepted the principle that they, representing the majority of the great powers, had the right and duty to intervene to prevent the overthrow of legitimate governments by force and violence. The French and British governments often cooperated with them in these endeavors.

Of first concern to Metternich were the revolutionary manifestations in the German states connected with the national and liberal revival that commenced in the Napoleonic period and continued into the conservative era. The most obvious signs of subversive activities occurred in the universities and in student organizations. Deeply affected by the spirit of the Romantic age, some groups adopted signs and symbols from the past, including the use of the colors red, black, and gold, associated with the Holy Roman Empire and medieval German greatness. Moreover, certain rulers in the middle states, in particular in Bavaria, Baden, and Saxe-Weimar, were willing to grant liberal institutions. At the same time, some public celebrations, for example, the Wartburg Festival of October 1817, held to commemorate the Reformation and the Battle of Leipzig, seemed to present dangerous revolutionary challenges. Metternich was able to use such events to persuade Frederick William III to join him in instituting repressive measures. In August 1819 representatives of the German states met at Karlsbad, where they passed a series of decrees designed to curb revolutionary activity and to control the universities and student activities. The diet of the German Confederation accepted these measures. The Habsburg government was thus able to assert its leadership in the area, but at the same time it alienated German national and liberal sentiments.

Similar events occurred in Italy. Here the first revolts were not so much national as directed against native repressive regimes, in particular those in the Papal States and in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. When a revolt broke out in Naples and King Ferdinand appealed for aid, a Habsburg army marched down the peninsula to restore his autocratic powers. Metternich also approved of French intervention in Spain in 1823 to suppress a revolutionary movement there. He was, however, to be disappointed by the reaction of the powers to the Greek revolution of the 1820s; here France, Russia, and Britain cooperated to establish an independent Greece in 1830.

The revolutionary wave of the 1830s brought similarly mixed results. Once again Habsburg troops entered Italy, this time to put down revolts in Parma, Modena, and the Papal States; the German Confederation again moved to suppress revolutionary activities within the member states; and the Russian Army crushed a revolt that broke out in the Russian-controlled parts of partitioned Poland. However, an insurrection in Paris succeeded in bringing a new monarch, Louis Philippe, to the throne, and an anti-Dutch uprising led to the establishment of an independent Belgium in 1831.

Nevertheless, until the late 1840s Metternich was able to contain the revolutionary elements in the two areas of major concern - the Germanies and the Italian peninsula. In addition, no rebellions had occurred in the Habsburg domains despite the growing discontent with conservative rule. Metternich's ability to control Prussian policy had certainly been a major element in his success; Frederick William III had not challenged the Austrian leadership. Nevertheless, in one field the Prussian position in Central Europe was strengthened. Starting in 1819 Prussia began to sign a series of commercial agreements with other German states, thus establishing a customs union (Zollverein) that by 1848 included most of the German states, but not Hanover and the Habsburg Empire. Prussian-Habsburg relations were also affected when Frederick William IV (1840-1861) became king. A difficult and erratic ruler with contradictory ideas, he was affected by the spirit of the Romantic age. He respected the Habsburg Empire as the first of the German powers, and he was attracted to the concept of the Holy Roman Empire, but he was not as pliable and open to Austrian suggestions as his predecessor. Similarly, in Italy new leaders assumed office. In 1846 Pope Gregory XVI, who had been close to Vienna, died; he was followed by Pius IX, who was expected to introduce reforms. Even more significant, Charles Albert (1831-1849) was now king of Piedmont. A new era was about to open in German and Italian affairs.

These changes abroad were paralleled by a growing discontent at home. Not only had nationalist ideologies affected, in particular, many Hungarians and Italians, but the peasantry was becoming increasingly restive. In 1845, 1846, and 1847 a series of natural disasters caused a dramatic fall in farm production. Hunger joined social discontent to turn the peasant into a potential revolutionary. Moreover, Vienna, the seat of the government, had also become
a possible powderkeg. The city had a middle-class intellectual leadership, well versed in revolutionary doctrine and tactics; it could count on the support of a discontented and exploited working class, which had also been made aware of radical action programs. The stage was thus set for the revolutionary year of 1848.

**THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1848**

Similar conditions existed throughout Europe; everywhere popular discontent and radical organization created a propitious atmosphere for revolution. The first revolts occurred in Sicily in January; in Paris in February Louis Philippe was overthrown. The revolutionary wave next engulfed the German states and the Habsburg lands, with revolts breaking out simultaneously in Vienna, Prague, and Budapest, as well as in Lombardy-Venetia. In the cities the leadership was in the hands of the liberal middle class, supported by students and workers; in the countryside the peasants joined the rebellion and demanded the end of the robot.

For the Habsburg government the events in Vienna were most disturbing. On March 13 the streets filled with crowds demanding reforms, in particular the enactment of a constitution that would meet liberal demands. A national guard was formed; students were organized into the Academic Legion. Since the Habsburg Army was concentrated in the Italian and Hungarian lands, the court did not have troops to use against the armed revolutionaries, and concessions had to be made. Metternich, the symbol for the crowd of reactionary rule, was forced to flee; a reorganized ministry, under pressure, then agreed to the convocation of a representative assembly that was to formulate a constitution. Most important, on March 28 a rescript was issued accepting the abolition of the robot in principle, with compensation to be given the landlords. Censorship was also ended. On April 25 the government issued a preliminary constitution for the Habsburg lands with the exception of Hungary, which by now had its own revolutionary regime. According to this document Austria was to become a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature chosen on a restricted franchise. When these provisions met with popular disapproval, and when more rioting in the streets occurred, the constitution was changed to provide for a single-chamber assembly elected without a property qualification for voting.

Despite the concessions, the court felt that the situation in Vienna was too dangerous, so it moved to Innsbruck on May 17, leaving the revolutionary leaders in control of the city. Elections were held in June and July everywhere but in the Italian and Hungarian lands, where fighting had broken out. On July 22 the first parliament in Habsburg history opened under the presidency of Archduke Johann. The deputies were not radicals. Of the 303 elected, the majority came from the educated professional middle class, but 94 were peasants; there were 160 Germans, with the rest Slavs, Italians, or Romanians. At Custozza three days later, on July 24, the Habsburg army defeated Charles Albert and the Piedmontese Army, which had come to the aid of the rebels in Lombardy-Venetia. This military victory, combined with the capture of Prague in June, greatly improved the position of the conservative forces; in August the court judged it safe to return to Vienna.

The great achievement of the assembly was the full emancipation of the peasants, except in Hungary. The robot and other obligations were abolished; as far as compensation was concerned, in return for a recognized full ownership of their land, the peasants paid a third of the cost, with the state and the lords contributing the rest equally. The measures took years to work out in detail, but the relative smoothness by which the task was accomplished had a negative effect on the revolutionary movement. The peasants, having what they wanted, tended to become nonpolitical and to withdraw from participation in further revolutionary activities. Moreover, many felt that the benefits had been a gift from the court rather than an accomplishment of the revolution.

With this major question settled, the assembly began a long period of debate on other issues. Meanwhile, revolutionary activity revived in Vienna. The renewed violence and the street demonstrations began to alarm some middle-class property owners, natural champions of law and order. They as well as the peasants began to move to the right. Feeling threatened by the renewed agitation, the court in October moved to Olmütz (Olomouc); at the same time the assembly was prorogued to meet again in November in Kremsier (Kroměříž) in Moravia. The court was now in an even stronger position. Not only had the loyal Habsburg army been victorious in Italy, but the troops had taken control in Prague.

The revolutionary movement in Bohemia produced an event that was to influence subsequent Habsburg history. In Prague a Slavic conference opened on June 2 that was intended to be the counterpart to the German national assembly that had been called to convene in Frankfurt. This meeting, under the leadership of František Palacký, demanded the organization of the empire on a multinational basis. It enunciated the concept of Austroslavism - that is, that the Habsburg Slavs should seek an autonomous organization within the monarchy rather than independence. The delegates expressed their opposition to German or Magyar domination, but they feared that should the state break up, the small nationalities would fall under Russian or German rule. Although Austroslavism thereafter remained an important alternative in the various discussions on the reorganization of the Habsburg Empire, the assembly was
unable to achieve any practical goals before it was disbanded by the army. Riots and demonstrations, similar to those in Vienna, broke out in Prague. When students and workers clashed with the soldiers, Gen. Alfred Windischgratz took control on June 17, established a military government, and put an end to all revolutionary manifestations. Having accomplished this task, Windischgratz led the army to Vienna, where it acted in a similar manner. Once the revolutionary regime in that city was suppressed, the court could again return.

Despite the military victories, it was clear that the central government would have to be strengthened. The monarchy could not continue to function with a mentally incompetent emperor. Members of the Habsburg family thus cooperated with strong ministers, among whom were Felix Schwarzenberg, Franz Stadion, Alexander Bach, and Karl Bruck. In December Ferdinand was persuaded to abdicate in favor of his eighteen-year-old nephew Franz, who took the name Joseph after that of the reforming emperor. In the first years of the new reign the emperor was strongly under the influence of Schwarzenberg, who proved to be an able minister in the mold of Kaunitz and Metternich.

The elected assembly, meeting in Kremsier, began debates on a constitution in January 1849 and by March had produced a draft. The arguments over the provisions showed a major division of opinion on the future organization of the state: the chief question at issue was whether the historic provinces should be retained or be replaced by new divisions drawn along ethnic lines. A compromise was reached by which the historical divisions were to remain, but they were to be subdivided according to nationality. A similar middle path was followed on the issue of a centralized or decentralized government. As far as the monarch's power was concerned, the constitution allowed him only a suspensive veto over legislation, but a large measure of control over foreign policy and the military. Ministers were to be responsible to the two-house legislature, elected on a generous franchise. The Kremsier constitution, as can be seen, expressed the liberal program.

Meanwhile, the court under its rejuvenated leadership was drawing up its own constitution. In contrast to the Kremsier delegates, the ministers favored a centralized regime, and they wanted the monarch to have an absolute veto. With the army under their control, they were able to dissolve the assembly in March; the delegates were told that they should go home and that the emperor would issue a constitution of his own. This document, drawn up under the direction of Stadion, called for a strongly centralist regime; there was to be one citizenship, one legal system, and one assembly. The monarch was to be crowned only as emperor of Austria; he was to have an absolute veto, and he could issue emergency decrees. This document, never put into effect, was formally rescinded in December 1851.

Although in full control in the rest of the monarchy by the end of 1848, the government was to find Hungary a more difficult matter. In March 1848, under extreme pressure on all fronts, the court had been forced to concede autonomous rights to the revolutionary Hungarian regime. That government, under the leadership of Lajos Kossuth, proceeded to create the type of state preferred by the strong Hungarian nationalists. With the adoption of the March Laws a liberal constitutional system was indeed introduced, but the historical divisions of Croatia and Transylvania were abolished. With their nationalist convictions overriding their liberal sympathies, the leaders attempted to govern as if indeed the lands of the Crown of St. Stephen were inhabited only by Magyars. As a result, the Romanian and Slavic populations turned against the revolution and sought aid from Vienna. Even in this situation the Habsburg government could not put down the rebellion. In May 1849 Franz Joseph asked Nicholas I to aid him. Russian forces then joined with the Habsburg Army in an invasion of the Hungarian lands; the revolt was crushed in August. Although Nicholas I thus did indeed come to the aid of a fellow monarch facing a rebellion, this action was to cause problems for the future.

With the revolutionary activities within the monarchy ended, the government could turn to completing the task of reestablishing control in the Italian peninsula and the Germanies. The Italian revolt, which had commenced in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in January 1848 spread rapidly to other states. In March Charles Albert gave in to the demands of the revolutionaries and granted a constitution. His action gave Italian nationalists a leader. When Lombardy-Venetia revolted, he agreed to come to the aid of the province. At first the Habsburg government had attempted to negotiate, but it could not accept the Piedmontese demands for the independence of Lombardy-Venetia and the cession of southern Tirol. The victory of Field Marshal Joseph Radetzky at Custozza in July and the subsequent Habsburg occupation of Milan resulted in the negotiation of an armistice.

Fighting flared up again in March 1849, but Charles Albert was once again defeated. Peace was subsequently made on the basis of the status quo ante and the payment by Piedmont of an indemnity. Charles Albert then abdicated; he was followed by Victor Emmanuel II (1849-1878), who kept the constitution and thereby won the approval of Italian liberals and nationalists.

For Habsburg history the events in the Germanies had even greater significance. As has been seen, after 1815 the monarchy did indeed hold supremacy in the Germanies; Prussia did not directly challenge Habsburg primacy. Although Metternich favored cooperation among the German princes, he strongly opposed national movements, particularly those with a popular base. German national revolutionary forces thus could not look to Vienna for support or inspiration, but they had more to expect from Berlin.
For some this second German state seemed more German-national in character, despite its Polish minority, than did the multinational Habsburg Empire. Once the revolution broke out, Prussia appeared also to be liberal. In March Frederick William IV accepted the demands of the revolutionary leadership for a constitution and the eventual merging of Prussia into a united Germany.

The central event in the German revolution was, however, the convocation of delegates from the various states in an assembly in Frankfurt whose task was to be to prepare a constitution for a united Germany. Archduke Johann, whose views did not conform with those of most of the Habsburg family, became head of the executive branch of a provisional regime established in July. The diet of the German Confederation was suspended. The first moves toward national unity had thus been taken, but there were certain grave weaknesses in the revolutionary camp, in particular its lack of a military force. Moreover, not only did many of the delegates not have the full backing of their own states, but, coming from only a narrow social and economic segment of German society - mostly university-educated teachers, lawyers, doctors, writers, and civil servants - they had few links with the majority of the people. The assembly also could not agree on a single program. The major debate came over the question whether Germany should be united on a großdeutsch basis, that is, with the inclusion of Habsburg German and Bohemian territory, or on the kleindeutsch alternative, which, by excluding the monarchy, would give Prussia the predominating position. The victory in October of the kleindeutsch camp showed the relative weakness of Habsburg influence in nationalist circles.

In March 1849 the assembly finally agreed upon a constitution creating a united Germany without the Austrian lands. The crown was then offered to Frederick William IV, who refused. With no viable alternative as chief executive, the revolutionary movement collapsed. Although the Prussian king would not accept a German crown from a revolutionary assembly, he was willing and eager to receive a similar invitation from the German princes. The Prussian action, however, came too late. Having defeated its major internal enemies, the Habsburg government could turn to the task of reestablishing its position of leadership in the Germanies; Franz Joseph and his advisers saw the German question chiefly as a struggle between the two princely houses of Habsburg and Hohenzollern. Not only did they wish to restore the German Confederation, but Schwarzenberg, presenting a vision of a great empire of seventy million stretching through the center of Europe, wanted to include in it all of the Habsburg lands. In this quarrel between Prussia and the Habsburg Empire, the Russian government, to protect its own interests, used its influence to persuade both powers to accept the reformation of the German Confederation on the basis of 1815. The Habsburg government also failed to gain another objective. Aware of the significance of the Prussian-led Zollverein, Bruck, the minister of commerce, attempted unsuccessfully to bring Austria into this economic union. Austria and Prussia did, however, sign a commercial treaty in 1853.

The revolutionary era in Central Europe thus was brought to a close with the restoration of the old order. No problems had been solved. Neither liberalism nor nationalism had lost its appeal as an attractive political program. Italian, Hungarian, and German nationalists could not be expected to abandon their struggles for unified national states. Nor had the Habsburg government solved the problem of developing political institutions that would bind more closely together its various nationalities, with their differing political, economic, and social interests.

NEOABSOLUTISM: THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY

With the reestablishment of its control over the domestic situation and with the regaining of predominance in the German and Italian areas, the Habsburg government still had to face the problem of how best to deal with both the internal and the foreign situations in the future. The revolutionary years had, as we have seen, brought a new emperor to the throne. Given the nature of the Austrian state, with the central position of the ruler in the political system, the character and attitude of Franz Joseph were of immense importance. Born in August 1830 in Schonbrunn, he had received the rigorous and careful training given a possible heir to the throne. He had served in the army, fighting in Lombardy-Venetia in 1848. He had also, of course, experienced the extreme danger that the revolutionary years had posed for the dynasty and the country. Thereafter he was deeply involved in all decisions affecting matters of state. Although he proved to be a competent administrator, he was to face a period in which Habsburg power declined rapidly, both in international relations and in its ability to assure internal cohesion and tranquility. The emperor also did not have a particularly fortunate personal life. In 1854 he married his sixteen-year-old first cousin Elisabeth, of the Bavarian Wittelsbach family. An exceptionally beautiful woman, with whom Franz Joseph was deeply in love, Elisabeth was neither willing nor able to accept the responsibilities of her imperial position. She spent much of her time traveling and was finally assassinated in Geneva in 1898. The emperor's children also caused him grief. A daughter died in infancy, and his only son, Rudolf, who resembled his mother, had difficulty adjusting to the life required of an heir to the throne. Married to a Belgian princess he did not like, he ended his life in January 1889 by shooting himself and his mistress, Marie Vetsera, in a hunting lodge at Mayerling. The new heir, Franz Ferdinand, displeased the emperor by insisting
upon contracting a morganatic marriage; he and his wife were assassinated in 1914, an act leading to the outbreak of World War I. It should also be remembered that Franz Joseph's brother, Maximilian, was executed by a firing squad in Mexico in 1867.

The emperor faced his personal problems by burying himself in his work. Having received the upbringing of a prince of the old school, he had deeply ingrained in him a strong sense of duty toward the dynasty and the state, concepts that were identical in his mind. He considered the Habsburg Empire a natural unit. Although he felt himself to be a German prince and preferred that language, he had no deep feelings on the matter and felt instead that his obligations extended to all of his subjects. He personally lived a simple life, but he insisted upon a strict observance of court etiquette and ceremonial. He was tactful, self-disciplined, and practical, with a strong sense of honor. He was not doctrinaire; ideas as such did not much interest him. Many felt that he was cold, and he had few close associates. His main endeavor was to hold the empire together. With this goal he hesitated to accept any major changes that might disrupt the internal order, and he did not support an active or expansionist foreign policy. Like Queen Victoria in Britain, he gave his name to an era in his country's history. During these years he won the respect and affection of a great part of the Austrian population.

With the victory of the court and a young ruler on the throne, the Habsburg leadership attempted to establish a system that would ensure domestic order and be strong enough to maintain its primacy in Central Europe and the Italian peninsula. Until his death in 1852 Schwarzenberg exerted the chief influence in the government. He worked closely with Franz Joseph, who in turn trusted and respected him. Thereafter, the emperor in practice became his own chief minister. The solution to the empire's myriad problems was again seen in the establishment of a centralized administration that would be strong enough to demonstrate to the internal and external enemies that the state was unified and indissoluble. In June 1849 Alexander Bach became minister of interior; his name is usually given to the new period of neabsolutism. The Stadion constitution, despite its conservative and centralist nature, was abandoned, and instead the Sylvester Patent was issued on December 31, 1851. Under its terms the emperor held supreme power; there were no representative institutions.

The new regulations were directed in particular against Hungarian separatism. Like most of the rest of the state, the Hungarian kingdom was divided into districts; Croatia-Slavonia, Transylvania, and Vojvodina were now separate units. The local administrations were abolished and the country was placed under the direct control of the bureaucracy in Vienna. Since it was difficult to find Hungarians with the necessary knowledge of German, men of other nationalities, often Czechs, were brought in. It should be noted that the system was applied not only to the Hungarians who had rebelled, but also to Romanians, Serbs, and Croats who had supported the court against the Hungarian revolution. They therefore could complain that they won in return for their aid and assistance exactly what the Hungarians received for their rebellion. Indeed, this centralized administration was introduced throughout the empire, with two notable exceptions: Lombardy-Venetia, which retained its organization as a separate kingdom; and Galicia, where, under the governorship of Agenor Goluchowski, the Polish aristocracy was able to maintain almost full control of its own affairs.

The Bach period also witnessed a strengthening of the position of the Catholic church, which wished to use the opportunity to regain its influence over matters such as family law and educational policy. It also wished to rid itself of state interference and to be able to remain in close touch with the Vatican. After 1850 many of its desires were fulfilled. With the signing of the Concordat of 1855 the church regained some of the privileges that it had lost during the reform period in the eighteenth century. In education it again had the right to oversee the content of instruction to assure that the subjects taught and the materials used were not in conflict with its teachings.

Despite the return to a system of stricter political controls and centralized administration, this period was characterized by strong efforts to modernize the economy, with many measures corresponding to current liberal economic theory, including a drastic reduction in the tariffs. The railroad network continued to expand. Here the most spectacular Austrian achievement was the completion in 1854 of the first mountain railroad, which ran from over the Semmering Pass and connected Vienna with Trieste. This city was the single Habsburg commercial seaport of significance. At this time also the measures fully emancipating the peasants, passed previously, were carried through.

The Bach system was designed to assure a period of stability and calm. Unfortunately for official policy, the years from 1853 to 1859 were marked by continual crises in foreign policy. Although nationalism within the empire had been contained, it continued to be the great doctrine of liberation movements not only in German and Italian lands, but also among the Christian people of the monarchy's Ottoman neighbor. Throughout the nineteenth century the Habsburg Empire was involved in the Eastern Question, that is, with the problems that arose in connection with the weakening of the Ottoman Empire and the revolt of some sections of its population. For Vienna prior to 1853 the most important events were the Serbian uprisings of 1804 and 1815, which resulted in the establishment of a semiautonomous principality and, even more significant, the formation of an independent Greek state in 1830. In regard to the Greek revolution of 1821, a major event in European diplomatic history, Metternich, who opposed all revolutions and feared increasing Russian
influence in the Balkans, first had tried to restrain tsarist intervention and then had left the major responsibilities in the hands of France, Britain, and Russia. The monarchy played a larger part in the Egyptian crises of the 1830s, but its role in the Eastern Question remained subordinate to that of the other three great powers, who at this time were in strong competition over who should dominate and direct Ottoman affairs.

The Crimean War of 1853-1856 was to place the Habsburg Empire directly in the center of this rivalry. In 1853 Russia and the Ottoman Empire went to war; in 1854 France and Britain and in 1855 Piedmont joined on the Ottoman side. Although the basic issue in the conflict, the relation of Russia to the Balkan Orthodox Christians, was of deep concern to Vienna, the Habsburg statesmen were placed in an extremely difficult situation. The basic Habsburg alignment in foreign policy was still the Holy Alliance, involving a close relationship with Prussia and Russia. In addition, the Russian government, expecting a repayment for the assistance that it had given in crushing the Hungarian revolt, wished the Habsburg government to adopt a policy of benevolent neutrality, not active intervention. Prussia, in fact, did assume what the Russian government regarded as a satisfactory attitude. Pressure, however, also came from the opposing side. The Western allies were faced with the difficult problem of finding a suitable battlefield on which to fight their adversary. Should the monarchy enter the war, a direct route into Russia would be opened. Habsburg forces would then, of course, face the unpleasant prospect of fighting on the front lines. Britain and France had effective weapons with which to put pressure on Vienna: for instance, the French government threatened to support Italian national forces fighting Habsburg rule. Piedmont was, after all, a Western ally, and its government was eager to use the occasion to forward nationalist interests.

Faced with equally impossible choices the Habsburg government wavered and finally, by issuing an ultimatum to Russia, forced it to make peace. In 1855 Nicholas I died; his successor, Alexander II, was extremely bitter about what he regarded as an Austrian betrayal. The breaking of the Holy Alliance and the subsequent Russian support for French policy in Italy and for Prussia in the German question were to have disastrous consequences for Habsburg interests in these areas. With Russian acceptance, national unification movements were henceforth to proceed in the Danubian Principalities, the Italian peninsula, and the Germanies. In each case, the results were detrimental to the monarchy's internal and external situation.

The first event in this new era of national consolidation occurred in the Danubian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, where in the winter of 1858-1859 the same man, Alexandru Cuza, was elected as prince in both provinces; in 1861 the administrations were amalgamated. The leaders of the Romanian movement had participated in the 1848 revolutionary activity. Liberal and national in conviction, they and their successors were bound to consider Transylvania, where the majority of the population was Romanian, as one of their future objectives. Although the Habsburg government opposed the double election, it could not act because of the situation in Italy. Since 1815 the Habsburg Empire had been faced with the danger of revolt in the Italian peninsula. After its victory in 1848-1849, the monarchy continued to collaborate closely with the conservative regimes in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Papal States, Tuscany, Parma, and Modena. The intense national feeling of the previous years had, of course, in no sense been stifled. Moreover, the revolutionary leaders knew who their principal opponent was: the Habsburg Empire. In direct control of Lombardy-Venetia and the chief support of the reactionary regimes in Italy, the monarchy was the obvious target for attack. In contrast, Piedmont served as a point of attraction. Victor Emmanuel II had kept the constitution of 1848, and he was served by a brilliant premier, Camillo di Cavour. Understanding the workings of the international system, Cavour first brought Piedmont into the Crimean War to gain attention to the Italian cause. He then assiduously courted his ally, France, whose ruler, Napoleon III, not only had come to power because of the events of 1848, but also was sympathetic to national movements. In July 1858 Napoleon met Cavour at Plombieres and promised French support to Piedmont if war should break out with Austria, but only if that state appeared to be the aggressor. After the war was won, Napoleon wished the peninsula to be organized as a confederation of states, much like that in the Germanies. France also negotiated to assure the neutrality of Russia.

The Habsburg Empire was not prepared at this time for a military confrontation with a major power. Expenditures on the army had not been sufficient to ensure a first-class fighting force. Nevertheless, the monarchy allowed itself to be provoked into declaring war, and it invaded Piedmont at the end of April 1859. Honoring his agreement, Napoleon came to the support of the Italian national cause. The Habsburg effort was also hampered by doubts about the reliability of the empire's Italian and Hungarian troops. Napoleon had been in touch with Kossuth and other Hungarian leaders who were in exile. Although France won battles at Magenta and Solferino, the victories were not decisive. Unsure of the attitude of the German states should war continue and unenthusiastic about the course events were taking, Napoleon III met with Franz Joseph at Villafranca, where the two monarchs drew up a compromise arrangement without Piedmontese participation. Their agreement, which called for little more than the Habsburg cession of Lombardy to Piedmont, was overturned by the actions of revolutionaries in the other Italian states, in particular by those of Giuseppe Garibaldi in the
Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. By 1861 the Italian states were unified under the leadership of Piedmont with two exceptions - Venetia, still under Habsburg control, and Rome, which was occupied by French troops.

CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERIMENTATION: GERMAN UNIFICATION

The loss of Italy, a Habsburg humiliation, reflected on state administration as well as on the military. Since the Bach system had proved a failure, a better alternative had to be found. The government had faced three centers of opposition to its centralizing policies. First, the landed aristocracy, conservative in conviction, wanted the provincial diets, which they dominated, to regain their lost authority. Second, the Liberals, a party composed primarily of middle-class Germans and bureaucrats, liked the centralized monarchy, but, as believers in the principles of 1848, wanted its power limited by a constitutional system and a guarantee of civil liberties. Neither of these groups was nationally minded, although Germans were predominant in both. In contrast, the third, composed of Hungarians, small landowners in the majority, wanted a restoration of the March Laws of 1848 and autonomy for the lands of the Hungarian crown. They preferred that the link with the rest of the empire be primarily through the person of the monarch.

To face this opposition the court did not have and never acquired its own organized party. It did not, for instance, attempt to call for support from the peasants or the smaller nationalities, such as the Croats, Serbs, Romanians, and Czechs, the majority of whom had certainly proved their loyalty to the crown in 1848-1849. The government preferred to work with and to try to balance those political forces which already had considerable influence and power, namely, those representing the German aristocracy and middle-class and the Hungarian and Polish nobility. From 1860 to 1867 various alternative proposals were examined to replace the existing system. Franz Joseph, after wide consultation with his advisers, made the final decisions. New measures were introduced by decree and often suddenly. Two basic questions were at issue with each change: the first involved the degree to which the empire should be centralized or federalized, the second the extent to which liberal measures should be introduced.

The first reorganization proposal, the October Diploma of 1860, declared "permanent and irrevocable" but never put into actual practice, reflected the interests of the old aristocracy, including the Hungarian, and marked a shift from centralized absolutism to conservative federalism. Bach was replaced by the Polish aristocrat Goluchowski. In a move toward representative government, Franz Joseph accepted some restrictions on his power in some areas, but he maintained his full authority in foreign policy and military affairs. Previously, in 1851, an advisory council of officials had been established, to which later representatives from the diets had been added. Under the October Diploma the membership of the Reichsrat (Imperial Council) was set at a hundred, and it was empowered to deal with the problems of the entire empire in an advisory capacity. The diets at the same time acquired more control over local affairs. The intent was to appease the Hungarians, whose administration now resembled that in effect before 1848, except that the nobility could be taxed and the peasant emancipation measures were retained.

The October Diploma, which favored the large landowners, displeased other groups. The German Liberals were unhappy with measures that reduced the authority of the bureaucracy and favored the nobility in the provinces. Even the Hungarian leadership was divided; many desired no common institutions such as the Reichsrat. Since the court could not afford to estrange its German Liberal supporters, Goluchowski was replaced in December by Anton von Schmerling, the choice of the German centralists, and another reorganization was undertaken.

The February Patent of 1861 was presented as the enactment of the October diploma, but in fact it reversed the aristocratic and conservative direction of that document and turned back to a liberal centralist orientation. The Reichsrat became a regular parliamentary body with the power to pass laws and approve the annual budget; its two houses consisted of a senate (Herrenhaus), composed of archdukes, high church officials, and nominees of the monarch, and an assembly (Abgeordnetenhaus) whose delegates were chosen by the provincial diets under an electoral system that assured the domination of the landed aristocracy and the German middle class. Franz Joseph retained his autocratic powers in foreign affairs and the military; he could also convok, prorogue, or dissolve the Reichsrat.

Although Schmerling remained in office from 1860 until 1865, the government did not function smoothly. The Hungarian leaders, refusing to cooperate, did not send delegates to the Reichsrat, and finally their diet was dissolved. Czechs and Croats attacked the centralizing features and felt some sympathy for the Hungarian objections. Even the German Liberals contributed to the ultimate failure of the system. Their hostile attitude toward the church split them from one of the main props of the monarchy. Their failure to fight for a wider franchise and a more democratic system alienated others. Their most destructive position, however, was that taken toward the Habsburg armed forces, whom they held responsible for their defeat in 1848. Liberals consistently opposed expenditures on the army, which thus still lacked essential equipment. It was not, for instance, supplied with the breechloading needle guns so important in future Prussian victories.

The situation obviously could not continue. After the unification of Italy it
was clear that the next crisis would involve a struggle with Prussia over supremacy in Germany. Franz Joseph and many of his ministers felt that the Hungarian demands would have to be met at least in part; Austria could not resist Prussian pressure in Germany with a Hungary in revolt at its back. Such a possibility had caused apprehension previously in the war in Italy. Negotiations between Habsburg and Hungarian leaders thus started in 1862; Ferenc Deák became the most important representative for the Hungarian side. By the spring of 1865 it was clear that the Hungarian demands would be met. In July the Reichsrat was dissolved and Schmerling was replaced by a Moravian noble, Richard Belcredi, whose principal task was to reach a settlement in view of the impending war with Prussia; as a first step the February Patent was suspended. When a newly elected Hungarian diet met in December 1865, most of the representatives supported Deák’s program, which called for a reorganization of the empire on a dualist basis with the lands of the Hungarian crown joined to the monarchy only through the person of the emperor and a common policy on foreign affairs and defense. Discussions were still in progress when Austria and Prussia went to war in 1866.

By this time the rivalry with Prussia over German affairs dominated Habsburg foreign policy. Until the middle 1850s, as we have seen, the Habsburg monarchy, despite an often unfavorable military position, had been able to control events in Central Europe. This position was maintained largely through the skill of a series of ministers, in particular Metternich and Schwarzenberg, who knew how to play the international balance and thus compensate for Habsburg weaknesses. However, for the next years the talent was to reside in Berlin in the person of Otto von Bismarck, who became Prussian minister-president in 1862. The dominating figure in European relations until 1890, Bismarck was to have as his first major accomplishment the establishment of Prussian hegemony in Germany and the removal of Habsburg influence from the region. He was successful to a large extent because he was able to obtain the support of Russia, whose statesmen deeply resented the Habsburg "betrayal" at the time of the Crimean War. As a former Prussian ambassador in St. Petersburg, Bismarck was in a good position to use the longstanding Russian-Prussian relationship. The friendship was strengthened in 1863 when a revolt broke out in the Russian Polish territories. Whereas Austria joined with France and Britain in expressions of sympathy for the rebels, Prussia firmly backed the Russian measures of suppression.

The Habsburg government was well aware of both the growing influence of Prussia and the strong desire throughout the German states for a closer union. The unification of Italy had shown the true strength of the national idea. The monarchy, however, could neither directly challenge Prussia on the battlefield nor lead a movement for German unification. With its multinational population, the Habsburg Monarchy could not stand as the principal sponsor of a purely German movement. Moreover, most German nationalist leaders, the heirs of 1848, were also liberals. The Biedermeier and Austrian absolutism did not attract them. Hampered in this manner, the monarchy could only respond to nationalist demands for action with suggestions of reform for the German Confederation. In August 1863 the Habsburg government sponsored a conference of German princes to discuss a strengthening of the organization. Among the Habsburg proposals was the establishment of a central parliament composed of representatives from the assemblies of the member states. Disliking this assumption by Austria of leadership, Bismarck, although with difficulty, persuaded the Prussian king, William I (1861-1888), not to attend the gathering. With the absence of the largest German state, the other princes could not well proceed with reform plans.

The series of events that led to the exclusion of Habsburg influence in Germany commenced with the war fought by Prussia and Austria against Denmark over the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Thereafter both powers, foreseeing a possible future clash, made diplomatic preparations for it. The Habsburg government concluded an agreement with France assuring its neutrality; Prussia signed a treaty with Italy promising it Venetia in return for military aid.

When the Seven Weeks' War broke out in June 1866, the Habsburg Monarchy had the support of the major German states, including Baden, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Saxony, Bavaria, and Württemberg, but of these allies only Saxony gave significant military support. The war with Prussia was a disaster for the allies and another humiliation for Habsburg arms. Victories were, however, won against Italy both at Custozza in June and in the naval battle of Lissa (Vis) in July. The decisive engagement was the Prussian victory at Königgrätz (Hradec Králové) in Bohemia. Thereafter Bismarck persuaded his reluctant Hohenzollern king, who wanted to press on to inflict a crushing defeat on the rival Habsburg dynasty, to make a moderate peace that would encourage a renewal of good relations. The Treaty of Prague, signed in August, required Austria to surrender Venetia to Italy and to pay a small indemnity.

Prussia took some territory from the Habsburg allies, but its major objective was the exclusion of Austria from Germany. The German Confederation was dissolved and replaced by the North German Confederation. This organization, under Prussian leadership, in eluded all of the German states except Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg and Hesse-Darmstadt. These four states were joined to Berlin by defensive-offensive alliances.

Thus the Habsburg Empire surrendered the position of primacy that it had held in the German lands for six hundred years. As Holy Roman Emperors the Habsburg rulers had been the first among the German princes; the office of
In addition to the common offices, two separate governments were established in Budapest and Vienna. Most of the lands of the Hungarian kingdom were placed under a centralized administration; a separate agreement, the Nagodba (Arrangement) of 1868, gave certain limited autonomous rights to Croatia-Slavonia. The establishment of the Austrian administration caused more difficulties. The Ausgleich had been negotiated by bargaining between the Hungarian leaders and the emperor, who consulted certain close advisers. The Austrian parliamentary institutions had not taken part in the discussions, but their approval was necessary. To obtain the agreement of the Reichsrat the court had to grant large concessions to the German Liberals, whose support was essential. The new political system, introduced in December 1867, was based on the February Patent. It made Austria a constitutional monarchy and met the Liberal demands for strong guarantees of civil liberties. Franz Joseph nevertheless retained many of his former powers, particularly in regard to foreign affairs and the military. He could still select and dismiss ministers, who were, however, to be responsible to the lower house; he also summoned and dissolved parliament.

The dual structure of the state was to have decisive significance for the future viability of the monarchy. The major problems in the future were, as shall be seen, to involve the demands of other nationalities for a similar political arrangement that would give them a position equal to that of the Germans and the Hungarians. Although the government in Austria was at times willing to make wide concessions, the Hungarian leaders, who represented only a minority of their population, were determined to maintain their privileges. Because of the terms of the Ausgleich, they were able to block reform in Austria as well as in Hungary and thus to prevent a reorganization that would have allowed other nationalities, for example, the Czechs or South Slavs, to enjoy similar rights. The Ausgleich also made impossible any attempt to reverse the decision of 1866. In October 1886 Franz Joseph appointed Ferdinand von Beust, who had been in the service of the king of Saxony, as foreign minister. It was widely surmised at the time that this strong opponent of Bis marck would make it an objective of his policy to regain the former Habsburg supremacy in Germany. Such a goal was, however, difficult to contemplate, since it would have involved an alliance with France, popularly regarded as a German national enemy. Even more important, Hungary, in touch with Prussia, opposed the policy. Although some Austrian leaders favored a strong anti-Prussian stand, the minister-president of Hungary did not.

Austria-Hungary thus played a relatively minor role in the final stages of German unification. The declaration of war by France in 1870 was sufficient to rally German national feeling behind Prussia. The Russian support of Berlin,
expressed in a clear warning to Vienna and a concentration of troops on the border, helped to paralyze the Habsburg government. The Prussian victory on the battlefield made any further attempts to hinder German unification impossible. An obvious sign of the shift in German leadership from Vienna to Berlin was the crowning of William I as German emperor in Versailles in 1871. The imperial German title, abandoned by the Habsburgs in 1806, was thus revived by the rival Hohenzollern dynasty. Moreover, the Prussian kleinadel, not the Habsburg-sponsored grosseadel, basis of German unification had prevailed.

As chancellor of the unified German state Bismarck was well aware of the importance of maintaining good relations with Vienna. In 1871 he met with Beust at Gastein; Franz Joseph and William I held a similar conference at Salzburg. Although fences were to some extent mended, a basic rupture was achieved only after Andrassy was appointed foreign minister in November 1871. A Hungarian nationalist and a revolutionary of 1848, he regarded Russia as the principal opponent and would have liked to see the formation of an alignment joining Austria, Germany, Britain, and Italy. He nevertheless accepted Bismarck's proposals to reconstitute the former Holy Alliance. The Three Emperors' Alliance of the 1870s was based not on a written agreement, but rather on the common policies adopted in Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, reinforced by exchanges of visits among the monarchs and foreign ministers. No major crises troubled the European scene or the relations among these allies until 1875, when a revolt in Bosnia and Hercegovina reopened the Eastern Question.

The conclusion of the Ausgleich ended an era in Habsburg history. In considering the years after 1815, it can be seen that the conservative period before 1848 was marked by stability and calm in internal and foreign affairs, a condition that, however, reflected the failure to make progress in significant areas. In 1848 the repressed desires for liberal reform and national rights broke forth in a great revolutionary movement that put the monarchy in grave danger. Although the revolutions organized from below on a popular or middle-class basis failed, many of the objectives were achieved in the next two decades by other means and with another leadership. The Italian and German national unification movements, accomplished at Habsburg expense, were carried through not by the people but by the Piedmontese and Prussian governments, led by the ingenious statesmen Cavour and Bismarck. Within the monarchy, after the initial absolutist period, Habsburg ministers attempted to work out some constitutional arrangement that would satisfy the demand for representative institutions. Here Hungarian national convictions prevented a solution that could be applicable to the entire state. The Ausgleich, as we have seen, was negotiated by the court with the Hungarian political leaders. Representatives of the other nationalities, including the Germans, were either conciliated afterward or not consulted at all. The Ausgleich, which gave the controlling position in Austria to the Germans and in Hungary to the Hungarians, was bound to arouse the animosity of the other nationalities. Until the fall of the empire the national question was to dominate Habsburg history.

2 THE DUAL MONARCHY, 1867-1918

The last half-century of the monarchy was to witness bitter internal struggles; the new arrangement in fact created more problems than it solved. The Ausgleich did not even guarantee good relations between Austria and Hungary; instead, almost immediately intense conflicts took place over the interpretation and implementation of the terms of the agreement. For the Austrian government, in particular for Franz Joseph, the Ausgleich represented the maximum concession to Hungarian opinion. In contrast, some Hungarian leaders wished not only a further separation, but even full independence.

The great problem in both parts of the empire, however, was the position of the non-German and non-Hungarian nationalities, representing together well over half the population. The controversies over this issue were eventually to paralyze the Austrian government and to arouse sharp controversy in Hungary. The Hungarian nationality policy, particularly, was to cause difficulties for both parts of the monarchy. Although Hungarians constituted less than half of the population of the kingdom, Hungarian leaders embarked upon a policy of intense magyarization, which was to cause bitter animosity and to raise the national consciousness of the other peoples. Not only did this situation create problems for Budapest, but the Hungarian leadership used the dual arrangement to block national reforms in Austria. Legalistic in attitude, it could always argue that if the Austrian state structure were altered - for instance, if a special agreement were made with the Czechs - then the terms of the Ausgleich would be violated, since the nature of one of the parties had changed. In this chapter the major emphasis is on the developments in Austria, particularly those affecting the Austrian Germans, since events here form the background for the postwar Austrian republic. The national conflicts and the political crises in Austria, but not in Hungary, will thus be treated in detail. However, before we consider these questions, a brief review of foreign policy is in order. Although no major dangers threatened the state from abroad, many issues in foreign affairs played a part in domestic policy.

FOREIGN RELATIONS TO 1908
After the loss of influence in Germany and Italy, Habsburg interest in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, particularly in the territory under Ottoman control, became greater. Thus when in 1875 a rebellion broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Andrassy was eager to cooperate with Germany and Russia to attempt to find a solution acceptable to both the rebels and the Ottoman government. The situation became more serious when in the summer of 1876 Serbia and Montenegro, autonomous states under Ottoman suzerainty, declared war on the Ottoman Empire. The subsequent Serbian defeats, combined with the public reaction to reports of widespread massacres of Bulgarian civilians by Ottoman irregular troops, placed great pressure on the Russian government to act to defend these Slavic Orthodox people. After making an agreement with Austria-Hungary over a future peace settlement, Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire in April 1877. The Russian military victory enabled that state to conclude in March 1878 the advantageous Treaty of San Stefano, whose terms, however, violated previous understandings with Austria-Hungary and upset the balance of power in the Near East. Under extreme pressure from Britain and Austria-Hungary, Russia consented to attend the Congress of Berlin and agreed to a modification of the peace terms.

The Treaty of Berlin of July 1878 created a new Balkan map: Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro became independent; an autonomous Bulgarian state was established north of the Balkan Mountains, with a semiautonomous province, Eastern Rumelia, to the south; Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania all received additional territory. For Austria-Hungary the most important section of the treaty was that which gave the state the right to occupy and administer Bosnia and Herzegovina and to occupy the strategic strip of land separating Serbia and Montenegro, the Sanjak of Novi Pazar. The control of the two former Ottoman provinces was assumed only after much domestic disagreement. Franz Joseph, among others, would have liked to annex the territory; the great powers would probably have agreed. However, both the German Liberals and the Hungarian government, which did not want more South Slav lands added to the empire, opposed their acquisition. After an occupation had been agreed upon, another serious problem arose. The provinces could not be added to either Austria or Hungary without upsetting the balance between them. Finally, it was decided that they would be put under the jurisdiction of the joint minister of finance, who had very little to do any way.

The Berlin settlement caused great resentment among the Russian leaders, who felt that Germany had not given sufficient support at the congress to their position. For a short time thereafter the close relationship between Berlin and St. Petersburg broke down. At this time and in the next three years the Habsburg Monarchy negotiated and signed the alliance agreements that were in effect at the outbreak of the First World War. The first, the Dual Alliance, was concluded with Germany in October 1879. A secret defensive agreement directed against Russia, it was to be renewed regularly at five-year intervals. In June 1881 the Three Emperors' Alliance of Russia, Germany, and the Habsburg Empire was revived, but this time a formal treaty was signed. A neutrality and consultative pact, it was to be renewed only once. The second major agreement with a lasting significance, the Triple Alliance among Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy, was concluded in May 1882. A defensive alliance directed against France, the treaty was renewed regularly and was in effect in 1914.

These three alliances gave Austria-Hungary a favorable diplomatic position. In addition, agreements signed in 1881 with Serbia and in 1883 with Romania tied these two states closely to Vienna. Although the clear direction of European diplomacy lay in Berlin, not Vienna, the monarchy was a member of the strongest European alliance system. This favorable situation, however, was soon to be endangered by another Balkan crisis, brought about when Eastern Rumelia revolted and declared its union with the autonomous Bulgaria. After its establishment by the powers at Berlin, that state had been under Russian influence. However, its prince, Alexander of Battenberg, and the leading political parties soon broke with the protecting power. When the revolt in Eastern Rumelia occurred, Russia thus opposed the union, since it would strengthen the position and prestige of the prince. In this first stage of the three-year Bulgarian crisis Austria-Hungary supported Russia. The union was, nevertheless, saved by the actions of Serbia, which launched an attack on Bulgaria. The subsequent Serbian defeat demonstrated to the great powers that it would be difficult to enforce the separation of the Bulgarian provinces. The Russian government, although accepting the union, was determined to oust the prince. In August 1886, with Russian prior approval, a group of army officers kidnapped Alexander and transported him outside the country. Although a counterrevolution brought him back, his subsequent injudicious actions forced him to abdicate. In July 1887 a Bulgarian assembly elected Ferdinand of Coburg as his successor despite strong Russian disapproval. In this second phase of the crisis, Austria-Hungary joined with Britain in support of Bulgarian defiance of Russian demands. As a result of this break, the Three Emperors' League lapsed in 1887. In that year the monarchy signed with Britain and Italy two Mediterranean agreements, which were designed to protect the status quo in the Black and the Mediterranean seas and were directed against both Russia and France.

Further changes in the European alliance system occurred in the next
decade. In 1890, when Bismarck was forced out of office, William II dropped the German treaty connections with Russia, whose government in 1891 and 1894 negotiated a strong military and political treaty with France. In 1895 the Mediterranean agreements lapsed. Although the Triple Alliance at this time stood in apparent opposition to the Franco-Russian alliance, Russia and Austria-Hungary in 1897 agreed to cooperate to maintain the status quo in the Balkans. By this date Russian attention had turned to the Far East, whereas the Habsburg government was preoccupied with its internal problems. Their joint endeavors to solve the Macedonian problem in the first years of the twentieth century showed that the two countries could work together effectively when it was to their mutual interest. With this period of relative calm in its foreign relations, lasting from 1887 to 1908, the Habsburg Empire could concentrate on the solution of its growing domestic controversies.