HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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WESTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY – 19th Century

Contents

POLITICAL HISTORY

GOVERNMENT

The directions adopted by the servant state, in the following century, were intricately diverse; a look at the new century's unfolding patterns of government, in England and France, illustrates the variety of societal shapings the two dominant Western European nations were destined to take.

England. England, it is said, decided to modernize itself through the Corn Laws, the repeal of which the Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel agreed to in l846, thereby greatly reducing the power of the landed gentry to regulate agricultural practice and policy in this first modern century. This move was part of an important tendency, in British government of the nineteenth century, to consolidate the national respect for traditional solutions, while learning from other countries what **not to do**. (Fear of the French revolution was so widespread, in Britain, that the very notion of democracy had become hated; and order and hierarchy in government were sharply defended, everywhere the British Crown held sway.)

Constitution. Accordingly the British government, as reflected in its Constitution of 1800, was not based on democracy, but on the Crown and its legislative powers, and yet as that foundation evolved it became evident that nineteenth century Britain was attributing increasing power to the House of Commons—a center of legislation with increasing availability to the vote and needs of 'the people.' This legislative approach to 'giving power to the people' was to remain the trademark of the British project of governing, throughout the l9th century, and would, in alliance with the many directed moves by the government—to improve the state of education, of the postal service, to guarantee the integrity of free trade, so essential to the mercantile elements of the society—would bring Britain into the next century liberal enough to satisfy its social constituency but untouched by radicalism.

France. In contrast to the relatively consistent and purpose shaped development of English government, in the nineteenth century, the government of France went through many stages, beginning, of course, with the most rabidly democratic event of the century in Europe, the French Revolution ((1789-92). This violent protest against monarchical indifference might seem to have heralded a century in which French government would come down forcefully on the side of the people, in which the tactical caution of the British, who worked their way through legislation and the vote, would be overturned by direct action. The fact is, however, complicated. There were to be moments of radical ardor, in say the Revolution of l848, when France joined much of western Europe in a revolutionary mode, and there was to be a staunch growth of Socialism among French intellectuals in the second half of the century, yet by and large France remained more conservative than Britain through the century; in l850, for example, only one third as many Frenchmen (as Englishmen) could vote for national representatives.

MILITARY

Peace. We wonder at a l9th century Europe, which, following on the early modern network of intricate military alliances, military religious-struggles, and dynastic rivalries, with in conclusion the turbulent

Napoleonic Wars, managed to characterize itself as the century of peace, the 'long nineteenth century.' It is in fact not before the reign of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, and the powerful Prussian alliances in the last third of the century—cf. The Austro German Alliance of 1879—that the horizon begins to darken with the war clouds that will become a thunderstorm by the thirties of the following century. There is a steady advance of military technology—paralleling the growing European globalization and trade superiority of the century—which reflects in an advance of details, and which will make its damaging face clear in the following century; advances in naval and fire power led the way:

Steel superseded wooden hulls on ships of the line; battleships like HMS Dreadnought made their competitors obsolete, with turbine engines, ten to twelve inch guns, and techniques for harnessing steam power which grew exponentially.

Breech loading cannon, with rifled steel barrels, replaced muzzle loaders. Infantry rifles replaced muskets, which were slow to load, and inaccurate.

Smokeless high explosives replaced powder in bullets; the modern field gun fired 20 rounds per minute.

On the level of military logistics, the western European world was as a whole taken by the model established by Chancellor Bismarck for the second Prussian Empire. Universal conscription, and mastery of the railways for military mobilization, were brought to new levels of fight-ready efficiency.

SOCIAL HISTORY

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

French Revolution. By the nineteenth century a revolutionary war had been fought, which represented all that Britain feared in the way of advanced and disruptive democracy. And yet the British and French joined in the same path of gradual modernization, as the century unfolded into increasing industrialization, urbanization, and the professions of commerce. The mirror of this change can quite expectably be seen again in the novel, which by this stage had become the most sensitive barometer of social change and class mode. The nineteenth century novel, in France and England, provides a lens through which to see images of what daily life really was.

Daily life. The classes had by this time been thoroughly shaken up, and while economic disparity was sharp, in both England and France, and elites, like the Victorian landed aristocracy, the Bloomsbury Circle, or the irrepressible *cercles literaires*, which continued to circulate the latest literary trends of the Parisian milieu, retained their trademark centrality to their cultures, and while the peasantry, which had not quite died out, continued to plough and hoe in the corners, the great mass of French and English people had become householders, with insurance and taxes to pay, and considerable freedom in mapping out career, marriage, and reproductive powers for themselves. We were truly in the modern period of class-free mobility, beginning to see our societies in terms of what kinds of skill deserves admiration in them: the dexterous diplomat; the scientific genius, perhaps a hero of vaccines; the poet who takes the age in hand, like Wordsworth; or the unseen Milton, mouldering in a country churchyard. Charles and Emma Bovary belong to many a nineteenth century French family, the *marriages de convenance* who conclude by perishing on their own misunderstanding.

GENDER RELATIONS

Undervaluation. The narrative we track, here, will be foreknown to all. We write it from the twenty first century, in which the multitudinous cries for gender equality, which have pockmarked the last two centuries, have arguably been heard by those males in the West of Europe who have ears to hear. It is

not long, however, since we read (and I think more or less accepted) passages like the following, from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). Charles Bingley watches the Bennett sisters occupied at their parlor activities, and cannot restrain himself from expostulating:

It is amazing to me, said Bingley, how young ladies can have patience to be so very accomplished as they all are. All young ladies accomplish. Yes, all of them, I think. They all paint tables, cover screens, and net purses. I scarcely know anyone who cannot do all this, and I am sure I never heard a young lady spoken of for the first time, without being informed that she was very accomplished.

Depreciation. From such a passage we easily look back on a long history of devaluing of women's abilities, and doubtless linger on examples like that of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the prophet of human liberation, who nonetheless found women valuable chiefly for their coquetry, and advised them to shoot no higher than needed to keep their men interested in them. The disparagement history is by no means justified, as we saw in a few spotty references to female mystics like Julian of Norwich, social critics like Christine de Pisan, mothers of the church, military leaders (Joan of Arc) or women of noble birth, cultural sophistication, and large secular influence like Eleanor of Aquitaine. Nor was the enlightenment perspective, of the eighteenth century, likely to miss the needs for an enlightenment of an entire half of their population.

Advocacy. Not only were women, as consumers, proving to be a potentially powerful economic force, but advocates for the wider social and political presence of women were making themselves heard on behalf of their gender. John Stuart Mill, the brilliant parliamentarian and philosopher, fought for women, and in his writing argued for the substitution of 'the rights of the person, 'rather than of 'man.' Olympe de Gouges, in her ironic' drama, *The Defence of the Rights of Woman*, 1791, mocked the pretentions of 'man' forever to prioritize his own rights. Mary Wollstonecraft (in 1792) published her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, in which she fiercely defended women's powers of thought and imagination. And of course, if we move to the far end of the century, we come upon the burgeoning of the suffragist movement, which already in the 1890's had its origins among figures like the two 'proto feminists' just mentioned.' While the right to vote was conferred on women in Britain and Germany in 1918, it was not conferred on French female voters until after 1945, and then only if the candidate for suffrage was literate.

Achievements in literature. Simply to respond to our earlier remarks on men, who dominated the western European literary scene, in the Early Modern Period, a note here on the prominence of some of the most effective female writers of the nineteenth century: (France) Mme. De Stael; Georges Sand: (England) George Eliot; Jane Austen; Charlotte and Emily Bronte; Mary Wollstonecraft; Mary Shelley.

ECONOMIC HISTORY

INNOVATIONS

Doldrums. With the exception of Auguste Rodin, the nineteenth century, in Western Europe, was a low point in the movement forward of sculpture. In part the reasons are embedded in the historical moment. After the Revolution there was much general uncertainty about the chief directions of society. For one thing, the Church had been severely wounded by the Revolution, throughout Western Europe, and without Church support, need, and commissions, an essential support for sculpture was missing. (Sculpture, it was realized when institutional support was absent, was an expensive art, requiring precise tools and equipment, and much personal time investment, and could not, like painting, thrive simply on the inspiration of brilliant household geniuses. It should be added that, in nineteenth century West Europe there was a marked decline in those kinds of large building projects—courthouses, cathedrals, administrative halls—which had theretofore served as launching pads for sculptural commissions.

Rodin. Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) stands out among the European sculptors of the nineteenth century, in power recalling the greatest works of his ideal, Michelangelo. As an independent spirited, and only modestly backed by fans or the wealthy, Rodin held powerfully to his conviction—wasn't it that of Michelangelo, also?—that a tenacious attention to the wonders of the human body was the only path to noble sculpture. (In this conviction he also gave his total allegiance to the spirit of such ancient Greek sculptors as Phidias and Praxiteles, whose muscular sculpted bodies are so 'realistic' they are 'ideals.') It was in accord with this muscularity that Rodin also worshipped the tightly wrought cathedral sculptures of High Gothic.

TRADE

Industrial Revolution. Britain and France continued in their roles as major trading and (in the case of Britain especially) colonizing powers. For Britain the dominant trading enterprise was in India, which was in different stages deeply incorporated into the commercial and even administrative functions of the British government. Earlier in the century British settlers had been content to be commercial (and very profitable) outliers on the huge raw materials cache, of the Indian subcontinent, but as the century progressed, and Britain's imperial-administrative hold on India tightened—the Anglo-Indian becoming a distinctive cultural type—the value of British imports—initially saltpeter for gunpowder, silk, spices, tea, indigo, rubber—grew until with the consolidation of a commercial empire on the subcontinent Britain was able to complement the trading revenue it continued to receive from its Atlantic colonies. The French relation to its North African colonies, like that of the British in India, became an increasingly intertwined social involvement, with French settlers long dominant socially and culturally, while the products of the Algerian land—from dates to precious minerals—incorporated themselves, as part of daily life, into French culture.

Opposites. It may be surmised, from the above, that in terms of trade along the opposite developments of Britain and France, at the approach of the nineteenth century, an Industrial Revolution was in the offing, which would particularly spike in Britain and its colonies, while doing away with the necessity for social overthrow, which awaited the French at the end of an eighteenth century declining into violence and anarchy.

Iron and steel. The Industrial Revolution in England introduced factories to England, Scotland and Europe, doing so through a series of technological advances, which were destined to modify Britain's world-wide trade. Coal mining, and the exploitation of its power, upgraded a series of railroads, manufacturing plants, and business enterprises, which spread out into migration and trade, from Britain to its world-flung empire. The growth rate of the British GDP was 1.5 percent from 1770-1815, and 3.00 percent from 1815-1831. The advance in rail transportation particularly accelerated the rate of British industrial production, and the transportation of trade-ready supplies. The primitive wooden rails of the early eighteenth century were replaced by wrought iron rails. By 1804 the first steam powered locomotives were hauling iron ore and seventy passengers a load at 5 miles per hour. It was of equal industrial importance, for the growth of the British economy and trade, that by 1860 iron had become the metal of acceptance for industrial projects, while not much later steel replaced iron, while cast iron bridges were being slung across Europe rivers, and iron ships set free on the ocean of trade. 'In 1847-8 railway builders bought three million tons for rolling stock, bridge building, and station building for 2000 new miles, plus the demands of the 3000 previously built miles of railway.'

CULTURAL HISTORY

VERBAL ARTS

Literature

Romanticism. This dominant movement, of literary sensibility in the early l9th century, is Romanticism, a product of great poetry of feeling and imagination—in England, think Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth's *Prelude*—but also an heir, of the kind of *Sturm und Drang* poetry with which Goethe and Schiller, especially in their dramas, topped off the eighteenth century. The Romantic poet turns to self, the engine

of passion, to nature, the true giver of meaning to humans, and to love—for all its dangers—as a source of depth. In the poetry of the romantic genius find simplicity of statement and feeling, separation from the metrical and verbal strictures of the poetry of 'antiquity,' and addiction to the visionary or dreamlike, a zone where Shelley famously captured the poet serving as one of the 'unacknowledged legislators of the world.'

So powerful was the impulse of Romanticism that for the first thirty years of the century it drove its literary power across the continent of Europe, and beyond it, to Slavic lands where Dostoyevsky's Underground Man, Lermontov's *A Hero of our Time,* or Alexander Pushkin, in E*ugene Onegin* curried the cult of the passionate hero; carried further the image given a presence even in 'wild America,' where visionaries like Thoreau and Whitman, or transcendental philosophers like Emerson burned with a hard Romantic flame—to rephrase a renowned line of Walter Pater.

Post-Romanticism. In France, among the movements succeeding Romanticism, Parnassianism brought solace to the aesthetes, for whom Romanticism seemed inappropriately close to life, and not sufficiently close, as the Symbolist poet Mallarmé wished it, to the forms of abstract and severe consciousness which sustain 'true poetry.' Poets like Rimbaud and Baudelaire, in France, enter here with life-style poetry of great power, poetry through which the torturous soul of the poet airs its wildness, its complicity with the fallen wherever it asserts itself. In the fiction of post-Romanticism, where the novel is being hard driven to account for vast changes in life world—maturing industrialism, daring capital investments, ever faster moving urban environments, social experiments like Communism, increasing freedom for women to shape their half of reality—and to lift from readers life burdens to which fictional conceptions offered noetic ballast. Is it not as though Emile Zola, Gustave Flaubert, George Eliot, or Thomas Hardy would have been auto-generated by history, had they not been flesh and blood offspring of progenitors immersed in the ups and downs of turbulent cultural innovation?

Languages

Germany, England, France. While the nineteenth century in Germany was slowly pulling itself together as a nation-concept, and there found itself speaking a scattered and regional tongue, both England and France found 'themselves' as budding, and soon colonial 'nations,' with ambitions for glory, and an increasingly curried narrative, to which the country could turn as its 'proud past.' 'Having colonies' was no small part of these industrial nations' strategy for disseminating its products, its culture system, and the regal dignity of its language. To this latter end, the British were careful to provide for colonial school systems in which, for example, the proper usages of English would be appropriately emphasized by the choice of grammar texts sent out from the home country. Higher education in Britain centered around a canon of the great texts of British literature—same in France, where the *gloire de la patrie* was celebrated iin the iconic brilliance of the French academy and its heralded intellectuals. In both Britain and France efforts were mounted to protect the King's English or the language of Racine, to which reference was constant in France.

Empire. The Industrial revolution and the spread of colonial empire were both keys to the spread and power of a national language. (Colonialism will have provided the same support for linguistic self-promotion among all the major partners in the colonial enterprise: Germany, Portugal, Italy.) The industrial revolution was one of the many epochs of transformative experience, to which the British people have found themselves subjected: the Norman Invasion, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the adventures of Englishmen and women of all ages, in the explorations of Africa; and yet no epoch could have outdone the Industrial Revolution in fertility of neologisms (*train, revolver, pulley, camera, telegraph, and many more*.)

Europe. The point is not that England is the benchmark of language development in Western Europe's nineteenth century, but that the kinds of social experience the British and French had were emblematic of the ever evolving foundation of the languages of these two countries. The Baltic, Scandinavian, and

Portuguese cultures were also In their own unique ways growing from the times they were placed in, their decisions about how to shape their futures, and the distinctive hungers of their enemies.

Mythology

Matthew Arnold's long narrative poem, *Balder Dead,*was published in 1855, and can be taken as a sample of the Victorian read on Norse mythology. The poem, we know from the start, is dedicated to a god illustrious for his purity and joy.

I. SENDING.

So on the floor lay Balder dead; and round
Lay thickly strewn swords, axes, darts, and spears,
Which all the gods in sport had idly thrown
At Balder, whom no weapon pierced or clove;
But in his breast stood fixed the fatal bough
Of mistletoe, which Lok the Accuser gave
To Hoder, and unwitting Hoder threw—
'Gainst that alone had Balder's life no charm.
And all the gods and all the heroes came,
And stood round Balder on the bloody floor,
Weeping and wailing; and Valhalla rang
Up to its golden roof with sobs and cries;
And on the tables stood the untasted meats,
And in the horns and gold-rimmed sculls the wine.
And now would night have fallen, and found them yet
Wailing; but otherwise was Odin's will.
And thus the Father of the ages spake:

Poetry. How would we describe the language? Multiply generously the tenor of the language, and you come on what seems to the twentieth century ear a monotonous, if highly literate, attempt to restore the Norse tone for contemporary English ears. (English, and then German, were in that order the languages entering the translation and retelling narratives of the nineteenth century, as they strove for an archaic that they fast felt slipping from them.

Nationalism. Throughout nineteenth century Scandinavia, the nationalist urge to feel one's past was directing attention 'back' into the Norse mythical world, which was by this time seen as a deposit of valiant warriors, all enduring men of the sea, and buyers-in to the national image. 'Viking' ships were beginning to surface; in l867 the Tune ship was unearthed in Norway, and with artifacts of its kind promoted a new knowledge of the Norse past, as did the discovery of items like the Gjermendbu helmet, inside which archeologists could easily imagine the bearded visage of a Viking sailor. Already in l837 Carl Chrstian Rafn had expounded the view that the Vikings had explored the North East Coast of America long before Christopher Columbus, a thesis which had naturally captured the Norwegian imagination.

Folklore

Pickwick. By the eighteenth century, as we know from the cultural history of Western Europe, a perspectival change was sweeping over the ideology-makers of England, France, and Germany. Do you remember the gusto with which Dickens' Mr. Pickwick—with his three best friends-- establishes a series of outings into the British countryside, to observe the curiosities of the people, and the environment in which the Volk led their lives. A proto scholar, Pickwick and his friends were interested in the 'antiquities' and curious folkways that enriched the British countryside. That spirit, of genteel curiosity, was widely spread in the Europe of the eighteenth century and in England and France, especially, has much to do with the curiosity that drives the growth of folklore. Scholars can easily take us through the eighteenth century, in any Western European country, to the point, a century or more in the future, where innocent delight and curiosity, in the peculiar customs and feelings of one's national peasantry, would morph into the first of those academic lenses we now so instinctively apply to the study of popular behavior.

Nationalism. From the early eighteenth century we see that the new readership of the time—printing has taken hold, publishing is an industry, urban culture is sharpening its separation from the life of fields and village—is beginning to adopt a self-conscious awareness of the cultural world in which it has grown up. No longer does one perform the rituals that others will look back on as folklore, no longer does one (like Shakespeare) become the names of the culture that is living folklore around him, but now one—the middle to upper class intellectual, arguably with a university education behind him, and some personal leisure—begins to look around him at the curiosities of his culture. He (and almost she, by 1750), will be buying a copy of Percy's *Reliques* (1765), reading MacPherson's *Ossian* (1765) and quite possibly being enthralled by it, reading Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*(1751) and reminding his son not to become a 'mute inglorious Milton, or perhaps, depending on his or her level of education, reaching across the channel to read Herder's *Journal meiner reise im Jahre 1769*, which will at once be seen to have raised the stakes of folklore collection studies to a level of anthropological philosophy, and thereby to have gained remarkable pan-European recognition. We are following our educated guide along a path that will eventually lead to Wordsworth's *Guide to the Lakes* (1810), and from there into a new century, the nineteenth, in which even the greatest poet-lovers of landscape and simple people, Shelley and Keats, write poetries touched with the sophistication and self-awareness of the modern.

Folkloristics. In the nineteenth century, the still amateur, and 'literary' interests of folklorists were gradually to be replaced by more academic attentions, as universities and their scholars developed their own analytic tools for understanding the folkoric backscape of their country. Antiquarians like John Brand (1744-1806) and Henry Bourne—a brilliant contemporary of ours--took the academic step of publishing books of standards for the study of national folklores. (This was a step into the professionalization of the study of the folklore industry, and threatens to double back on itself, and generate a new breed of folklore objects, the very students of folklore themselves.)

Sculpture

Doldrums. With the exception of Auguste Rodin, the nineteenth century, in Western Europe, was a low point in the movement forward of sculpture. In part the reasons are embedded in the historical moment. After the Revolution there was much general uncertainty about the chief directions of society. For one thing, the Church had been severely wounded by the Revolution, throughout Western Europe, and without Church support, need, and commissions, an essential support for sculpture was missing. (Sculpture, it was realized when institutional support was absent, was an expensive art, requiring precise tools and equipment, and much personal time investment, and could not, like painting, thrive simply on the inspiration of brilliant household geniuses. It should be added that, in nineteenth century West Europe there was a marked decline in those kinds of large building projects—courthouses, cathedrals, administrative halls—which had theretofore served as launching pads for sculptural commissions.

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Architecture

Presence. If we review the continuing stream of Western European architecture, we see that by and large what is understood as the classical remains a persistent theme. In the early Renaissance the notion of the classical dominates architectural style, and that because, in Western Europe, the actual presence of Greco-Roman lands and cultures is right beneath your feet. (That depends, of course, on just where you live, but may be possible anywhere in Western Europe, giving the material-ware saturation of an area the size of Western Europe, subject for centuries to Roman and Greek boots and buildings.

Travelers. A decisive turn, within this native classical tradition, in Europe, was given by such factors as developments and discoveries within archeology, by a rage for continental travel, which took Western European art connaisseurs to every corner of Europe—often to places like Southern Italy or Greece—by trade and by commerce, which by the eighteenth century were clogging the Mediterranean—even by rediscovered ship wrecks, which were beginning to be uncovered from the ocean floor, as often as not laden with massive loads of commercial amphorae, intended for the wine or grain trade.

Neoclassical. The Neoclassical style, as a continuation of the stages of Renaissance style, is manifestly linked to its predecessors, favoring the Palladian styles when it comes to domestic architecture, and leaning toward the Gothic in general slant. The Gothic of l8th and l9th century architecture is not the dark and obscured Gothic of the high middle ages, or of mysteriously dark places hidden away in such structures, The new Gothic we are looking at is if one might so express it, the Palladian Gothic, the sharp outlines and clear paced form Palladio himself proposed, The neoclassical of this New Gothic ramps up constantly, through the eighteenth century in England and France: Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1776), Herder's *Journal meiner Reese im Jahre 1769* (1769), Goethe's *Italienische Reise* (1786-1788) —all these classics are drawing sharp attention around Europe, as the actuality of such stunningly painted interiors as those of Herculaneum and Pompei burst free of their ash.

Napoleon. In l806 Napoleon wishes to build a memorial church to his victories, and his immediate thought is of the Greek exemplars he can turn to. In l806 he turns to his first choice, a version of the ancient Greek Parthenon, and though it morphs in process, eventually becoming La Madeleine, he has found the track of his time. In Edinburgh, in l822, another Parthenon is started—after all what better inner image to work from—as a memorial to the Scots who have died in the Napoleonic Wars. When it comes to choosing a design for the new British Museum, in 1823, an extended Parthenon is the first model that occurs.

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance

Waltz. While its origins antedated the l9th century, the growing and soon overwhelming popularity of the waltz, an originally German dance form, rooted in *the Sturm und Drang* cultural energies of late 18thcentury Germany, opened a turn toward the future, the individual, and the cultures of nascent democracy, which were profiling themselves across the backdrop of l9th century Western Europe. The waltz, a one on one dance involving freedom, character, and expressiveness, all the characteristics implicitly sought by the Romantic Movement, and the French Revolution, which had turned its back on the rigid formalisms of court dance, spread into the l9th century in all directions, populist and noble alike, to the greatest extent possible exemplifying that power of the dance form which Werther expressed, in Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther (1779):*

Never have I moved so lightly. I was no longer a human being. To hold the most adorable creature in my arms and fly around with her like the wind, so that everything around us fades away.

Ballet. Latent as a growth direction throughout the pre-revolutionary era, was the ballet form, which, as we have seen, had its origins in court, yet spread from there into popular entertainment. Schools of ballet sprang up in all major capitols, and spokesman scholars of ballet—like Jean-Georges Noverre, an influential reformer and scholar of the ballet movement—competed with one another, throughout western Europe, for the prestige of the ballet companies which they themselves led. Among the dancers of the Romantic ballet scene, ballerinas imperceptibly took over as principals, having been better instructed and better equipped—looser garments, open toed slippers—than their male counterparts. Voila the origins of the ballet *prima donna*. During the first half of the nineteenth century there was a rage for 'spiritual' and

filmy ballets, like*La Sylphide* (1836) which biopsied the crossing over points between the spiritual and the real worlds.

Theater and ballroom. The hunger for public entertainment grew in the second half of the nineteenth century, beginning to manifest itself in the dancing in ballroom halls and theaters. For a while it was female can shows with their much enjoyed displays of legs and genitals. Then, as public culture grew ever more in your face, there were minstrel shows, music hall reviews—Jacques Offenbach's *Gaieté Parisienne* was not staged until l938, but think how vividly it summons up the atmosphere of nineteenth century music hall life, and of the pleasure loving (and wan) girls who sought that life, in the paintings of Toulouse-Lautrec.

Music

Romanticism. The Romantic period opens here, though in musical development it is in many ways hard to distinguish from the so-called classical brilliance of the preceding century. With the development of the century three main kinds of musical presentation crept into dominating attention: the symphony orchestra; the piano (which had squeezed out such earlier formative instruments as the clavichord); the solo voice with piano accompaniment. The distinctive new features of performance in the period were length—symphonies lasting typically more than an hour; and 'instrumental color and variety', that is to say a great new power of emotional expressiveness. Once again, periodization by centuries is particularly difficulty when it comes to the history of music; and seemingly easier when one approaches the development of the history of literature, where, to stick with our present example, the eighteenth century poetry of Western Europe breaks sharply to be replaced by the Romantic poetry of Wordsworth or Heine or Lamartine.

The opera, with the free range it gives—not for the fulness of historical expression like Beethoven, but for the fulness of individual passion—as we find it in the Romantic heart-builders of Verdi (*La Boheme*; *La Traviata*) and Puccini (*Madame Butterfly)*—the opera becomes a benchmark achievement for the popular passions of the nineteenth century. The operatic achievements of Richard Wagner (1813-1883) In Germany were perhaps representative of the best and the worst developments of nineteenth century music, as they touch on nationalism, the passion of the group, and the power of the Volk to elevate and pervert thought. In works like *Die Meistersinger von Nuernberg,*to which we referred earlier, Wagner takes us back to the cultural texture of the Middle Ages, and for the only time in his creative life writes comedy in music. Nor does he touch the specific issues of German nationalism, for which the Nazis wished to appropriate him, though Wagner was on paper an opponent of Judaism, and in his exaltational tempos, which impels us into the wind, he provides quasi visionary passages olf sublime beauty which carry us to the ultimate good or bad of our souls.

Theatre

Feeling. The distinguished *Sturm und Drang*movement in Germany, which straddled the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, brought to the European theater a new stress on *Empfindsamkeit,*feeling or sensibility, as well as on the new elements of melodrama, which had entered the western theatrical scene with Kotzebue's *Misanthropy and Repentance (*1789). In Germany, especially, there was a move toward new realism and accuracy in historical stage settings and costumes. As the century—not the greatest for either drama or theater—wound on, two kinds of taste began to make their claims, and to speak for distinct publics: these were the claims of realism, the attempt to reestablish on stage the mood and actual properties of another historical moment, and, on the other hands, the taste for symbolism and expressionism—which were just beginning to acquire their voices

Self-awareness. While actual staging practices, for example those promoted by Georg II, Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, brought increasing historical fidelity to staging, and laid the groundwork for Wagner's highly dramatic scenographies of Teutonic scenes of love and war, another kind of realism, that of Henrik Ibsen in Norway, made for a major addition to work theatrics. In the twenty five plays he wrote at the end of the century, he covered the realities of marital break up, personal disintegration, shame, gross ambition, cynicism, and did so in a way that captured not only the fascination of the new middle class, but

its developing sense of self-awareness. Toward the end of the century, a number of other urbane playwrights, some British, showed the middle class how to laugh at the unstable pendulum of the human condition.

WORLDVIEW

Philosophy

Proliferation. By the l9th century the narrow streams of mediaeval philosophy, and even the growingly secular epistemology and science of the late seventeenth century, seem ground laying steps toward a full fledged curriculum of highly developed 'areas of philosophy,' the ethics/aesthetics/ logic/epistemology outlay with which the modern University tames the irregularities of a growingly undisciplinable discipline. As in politics, economics, and government, nineteenth century western philosophy too finds itself sprouting out in every direction.

Idealism. The idealism of a philosopher like Schelling (1775—1854) spins from the earlier thinking of Hegel, though the two clash sharply over whether the Absolute, God, can be thought and understood. Out of the brambles of dispute, between these two men, emerge the outlines of the most influential philosophies of the century, German—and academic. From Germanic traditions, but splaying out in varied directions, come the philosophies of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1908), a German Professor of Classics, and Karl Marx 1818-1883). Each of these activists—Marx believed that the philosopher's job is not to 'understand the world' but to 'change it'—diverged sharply from the tendencies of idealism.

Marx. Marx turned his insights on to the injustices of the social system, which was so constructed that the workers enjoy little of their fruits of labor, and the employers (the capitalists) run away with the profits. The philosopher as social critic, in this case, is a product of his century's newest uses of the self-reflective action of the mind in philosophy. No less the critical acerb, and a bleak foe of the mediocre in mankind, Nietzsche too is a condemner of ills: of man as pompous fool; of god as illusory soft soap; of bourgeois sentimentality, with all its false hopes and simplicities.

Philosophies of Existence. The diversity of the period—for which the nature and construction of society, and of social behaviors, has become a target of attention—is evident in the thinking of the Danish philosopher, Soeren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), with whom we can see how unexpectedly the religious impulse we began by ausculting, can return in a modified guise—one that Marx and Nietzsche would scorn. Kierkegaard, whose thinking directly presages that of the European Existentialists of the following century, puts heavy emphasis on the life presence (and historical condition) of the thinker—as distinct, say, from the mind as naked knower (Descartes) or from the mind as concept forming and reason testing (Kant). God, for Kierkegaard, factors back into the center of thought, when once we have entered ourselves as the anxiety of why, why are we here?

Religion

Nationalism, secularism, Liberalism, the missionary movements, the retreats and then the resurgences of Roman Catholicism, the birth of multiple new Protestant sects, the opening up of interest in Africa, as a field for Christianization: all these complex trends, so fundamental to 19thcentury religious history, tumble forth as we make an effort to put our minds around this most formative and unsettled century of cultural development in Europe.

Nationalism. The fortunes of Christian belief—still the dominant religious presence in the region, although the numbers of the disaffected, disbelieving, and hostile were steadily growing—rose and fell with the development of nationalism in the major Western European countries. The story of l9th century religion, in western Europe, will be different in Britain, France, Germany, and on around the continent. In Britain the dominant trend, within Christianity, involved returning to the Anglo-Catholic roots which had been kept alive through the Anglican High Church. Anglican Sisterhoods, revived religious orders, and self-expression in Catholic masterpieces like Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua*all played into a Christian revival distinctive to the British Isles. In Germany the Prussian King William III insisted on taking direct

and full control of the Protestant churches in his domain-- impressing them all with a single liturgy, and a rigid hierarchy, at the head of which he governed. In counter response, ordinary Protestants and Catholics, elsewhere in the German Empire, retreated in great numbers into private spiritualities, and into the 'holiness' of Pietism, whose influence came to be felt far outside Germany. France, for its part, remained essentially Catholic throughout the nineteenth century. During the French Revolution the French Catholic Church lost most of its power, but in a Concordat (1801) signed by the Pope and Napoleon, after the war, most of the powers of the Church were restored—with the important exception that the Church could communicate with the Vatican only through the French government. The rest of the century saw a continual power see-saw of Catholics with Protestants and with the State. The barometer for the power of the Church, at any given time, was the number and influence of wealthy conservatives on the cultural landscape, for this persistent elite gentry remained faithful to the Catholic faith and its institutions.

Modernism. The Christian churches as a whole, and above all the intellectuals among them (especially in Germany as it turned out) were diligent in their efforts to reconcile science (the keyword of the Enlightenment) with Christian doctrine. Against the 'scientific' thinking of Enlightenment philosophes, the bold anti-Christian arguments of men like Diderot and Condorcet, in the preceding century, and the anti-clerical Higher Criticism of the Bible the Christian Churches foregrounded the thinking of luminaries like the Danish philosopher, Soeren Kierkegard, and the German liberal theologians Friedrich Schleiermacher and Adolf von Harnack. The result was a renaissance of theological reflection, which represented a large step forward in self-confidence for the Christian position. Arguments were skillfully shaped, to reconstruct the essential narratives of Christian scripture, and thus to represent the long scriptural tradition in its undoubted existential presence, while sidestepping the claims of 'scientists,' that religion was superstition.

Missions. It was a trademark of l9th century nationalist spirituality that nations competed vigorously for missionary presence in lands where belief was 'undeveloped,' or 'primitive.' The mindsets of this excursus of helpful people were in the highest degree diverse, and though the movement did much to spread knowledge and sometimes love for the Christian religion, it also stirred hostility among those who saw it is as covert imperialism, patronizing head-patting—Dr. Albert Schweitzer referred to his African flock, at Lambarene, as my 'brothers, my little brothers'—or even ignorance, of the time-tested ways in which sub-Saharan Africans care for themselves.

Science

Science. In 1833 William Whewell coined the term *science*, a term wrapping up the bundle of inquiries—chemistry, physics, astronomy, biology, anatomy—which had formerly fallen into diverse categories, with particular favor toward 'natural philosophy,' a term linking this set of inquiries to the broad categories of human investigation congenial as far back as the Middle Ages. We were in l833 still far from today's*trivium,*which includes humanities and social sciences, along with the natural sciences, as the framework for our knowing of the world.

Harvesting. If the seventeenth century opened vast inquiries into the skies, the movements of the planets, the relation of earth to the cosmos, the movement of the blood within our bodies; and the eighteenth century brought these bold methodological inquiries into*social awareness*, the nineteenth century can be characterized by its probing of specific realms of natural and mathematical inquiry—its concern with evolutionary biology, higher math and its application to physical processes, electrical currents, their structure in electromagnetic processes and their ultimate uses In such devices as the telephone, and such beneficent insights as the germ theory of disease. Through its multiplying and ever better equipped facilities—labs and institutes—the science of nineteenth century western Europe was harvesting hard won discoveries and disseminating them through the increasingly democratized and prosperous middle class of a rapidly growing western Europe.

Darwin and Pasteur. Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*, which combined extensive world travel and observation, with the highest grasp of data-implications, offered mankind a glimpse of his developmental history, and inspired a reorientation, disorienting to many of the orthodox for its implication that we are

‘higher apes’. Pasteur took us into the germ theory of disease, instructing us proactively how to take care of ourselves. He also invented a vaccine against rabies.

James Clerk Maxwell, and a host of fellow investigators, made advances In understanding the properties of electricity, among them electromagnetism and, with the input of brilliant mathematicians, the laws of thermodynamics and the principles needed for the construction of all manner of electrical motors, the basis for everything from our fans to our cars.

Gauss, Boole, Cantor. The study of mathematics grew increasingly abstract, and at the same time unpredictably practical, in the course of the nineteenth century. Carl Friedrich Gauss contributed to a fundamental understanding of algebra and geometry. Georg Cantor laid the foundations of set theory, which would play a creative role in symbolic logics. George Boole thought through to what we call Boolean algebra, which has proven essential to the construction of the personal Computer.