

abstract thing, to which every human being has fundamentally a claim; a right to freedom must evidently depend upon capacity for it, and this again presupposes physical and intellectual power. One may make the assertion, that even the mere conception of freedom is quite unknown to most men. Do we not see the *homo syriacus* develop just as well and as happily in the position of slave as of master? Do the Chinese not show us another example of the same nature? Do not all historians tell us that the Semites and half-Semites, in spite of their great intelligence, never succeeded in founding a State that lasted, and that because every one always endeavoured to grasp all power for himself, thus showing that their capabilities were limited to despotism and anarchy, the two opposites of freedom?

Judaism in Music: Anti-Semitism

Richard Wagner

One of the darkest aspects of racist thought during the second half of the nineteenth century was its growing stress on anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism has a long history, but it welled up with new strength after mid-century, particularly in Germany, where it became an important social and political force. An example of this bitter anti-Semitism comes from the pen of the great German composer, Richard Wagner (1813–1883). The following is an excerpt from "Judaism in Music," an article he published in a German journal in 1850.

CONSIDER: *The elements of Wagner's anti-Semitism; the support he uses for his arguments against the Jew; how this relates to the ideas of Houston Stewart Chamberlain.*

SOURCE: Louis L. Snyder, ed., *Documents of German History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1958), pp. 192–193.

It is necessary for us to explain the *involuntary repugnance* we possess for the nature and personality of the Jews. . . . According to the present constitution of the world, the Jew in truth is already more than emancipated: He rules, and will rule, as long as Money remains the power before which all our doings and our dealings lose their force. . . . The public art taste has been brought between the busy fingers of the Jews, who reside over an art bazaar. . . . The Jew's outward appearance always has something disagreeably foreign about it. . . .

The Jew speaks the language of the nation in whose midst he dwells from generation to generation, but he always speaks it as an alien. Our whole European art and civilization have remained to the Jew a foreign tongue. In this speech, this art, the Jew can only after-speak and after-patch—cannot truly make a poem of his words, an artwork of his doings. In the peculiarities of Semitic pronunciation the first thing that strikes our ear as quite outlandish and unpleasant, in the Jew's production of the voice sounds, is a creaking, squeaking, buzzing snuffle. . . . The Jew who is innately incapable of enouncing himself to us artistically through either his outward appearance or his speech, and least of all through his singing, has, nevertheless, been able in the widest-spread of modern art varieties, to wit, in Music, to reach the rulership of public taste. . . . Control of money through usury has led the Jews to power, for modern culture is accessible to none but the well-to-do. . . .

The Jews have never produced a true poet. [Heinrich Heine] reached the point where he duped himself into a poet, and was rewarded by his versified lies being set to music by our own composers. He was the conscience of Judaism, just as Judaism is the evil conscience of our modern civilization.



Visual Sources

The Hatch Family: The Upper Middle Class

Eastman Johnson

The following 1871 portrait of the Hatch family by the American artist Eastman Johnson (figure 14.1) shows a number of elements of the condition, style of life, and values of the upper middle class. Both the quality and quantity of the furnishings and the clothes indicate how materially well to do this family is. The clothes and demeanor convey the strong sense of propriety; yet the activities of the children

and the position of their toys denote how child-centered this family is. The appropriate gender roles are suggested: the father at center right in an authoritative pose, with pen in hand sitting at his desk, the grandfather on the left, keeping up on the news by reading a paper, the mother on the right, generally surveying her children, and the grandmother on the left, knitting. The large painting on the left as well as the sculptures on the right show this family to be properly supportive and appreciative of the arts. The large bookcase on the right indicates a respect for literature and learning. Heavy curtains largely block out the outside world; values



FIGURE 14.1 (Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, NY)

of domesticity and privacy are evident.

CONSIDER: What lessons the nineteenth-century viewer might learn from this portrait.

The Ages of Woman

This mid-nineteenth-century French engraving (figure 14.2) shows an idealized image of the ages of woman. In the center, three religious scenes represent the purity of woman's origins, place on earth, and final destination. Around this foundation is the woman at nine ages, from the happy playful child of ten years old to the solitary honorable grandmother of ninety years role as a middle-class wife, mother, and grandmother.

CONSIDER: What image of women's proper nature and role this conveys to nineteenth-century viewers; how this fits with the Eastman Johnson portrait and the analysis of European women by Riemer and Fout that follows; how an image of the ages of man might differ.

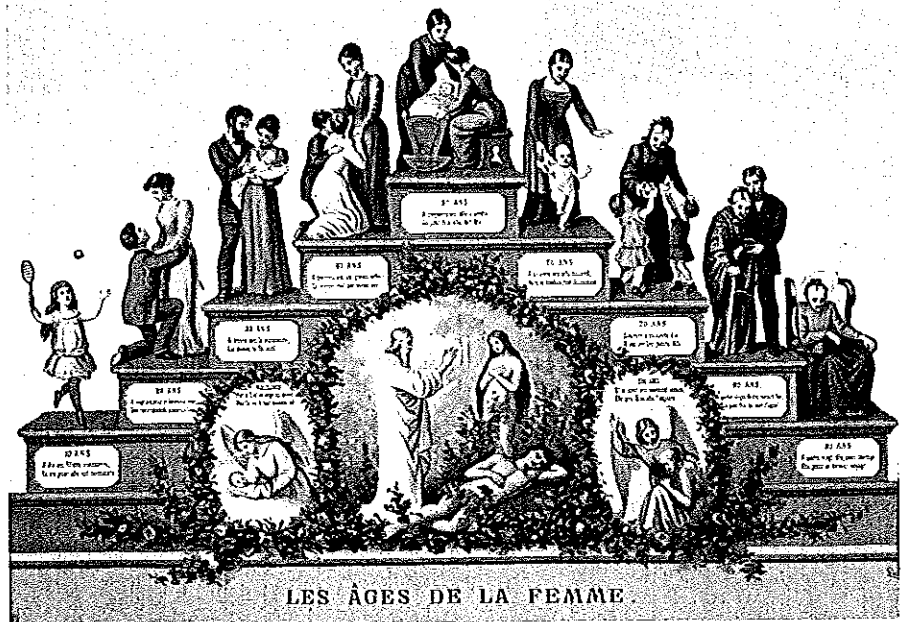


FIGURE 14.2 (© Musee Nat. des Arts et Traditions Populaires, Paris, France, Lauros/Giraudon/Bridgeman Art Library)

Lunch Hour: The Working Class

Käthe Kollwitz

Accompanying the rise to prominence of the upper middle class was the growth of the urban working class, the two economically dependent on each other but in strikingly different conditions. This 1909 drawing by the German artist Käthe Kollwitz

(figure 14.3), entitled *Lunch Hour*, gives an impression of the condition and spirit of the German working class. The workers seem to be part of an almost undifferentiated mass, dully and similarly clothed, eating low-quality meals in uncomfortable circumstances, and above all displaying a physical and psychological fatigue and a pervasive sense of discouragement.

CONSIDER: How this drawing relates to the views of Marx and Engels.

The Stages of a Worker's Life

Léon Frédéric

Léon Frédéric (1856–1940), for a time Belgium's most famous painter, tried to encompass all stages of a worker's life in this large 1895 triptych (figure 14.4). In the foreground of the central panel, children on the right play cards while on the left they carry and nibble bread. Their parents and young couples stand just behind them; in the background are the aged members of the working class whose ultimate fate is marked by the distant but approaching funeral coach. The left side panel depicts the man's work world, where men of all ages, from adolescence to old age, engage in manual labor or observe it. In the foreground they are

digging while in the middle ground they struggle with heavy beams. Behind them are the factories where they work. The right side panel shows women's world, all mothering and



FIGURE 14.3 (Käthe Kollwitz: *Lunch Hour*. Black charcoal and ink on paper. Nagel/Timm 469. Private Collection. Photo courtesy Galerie St. Etienne, New York)



FIGURE 14.4 (© Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY. © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/SABAM, Brussels)

nurturing with babies in their arms and at their breasts. Behind them are market stalls where they shop. Here is a vision of workers' lives in a nutshell: hard manual labor for men, childrearing and food preparation for women, and at the end old age and death for all.

CONSIDER: Whether this seems like a realistic depiction of workers' lives; how, in content and tone, a corresponding depiction of middle-class lives might look.

The City

Jacob Steinhardt

During the decades surrounding the turn of the century, great cities like Brussels, Paris, Milan, London, and Berlin became thriving embodiments of modern life. But many artists revealed disturbing undersides to these modern urban centers.

The 1913 canvas, *The City* (figure 14.5), by German expressionist artist Jacob Steinhardt (1887–1968) is one apt example. In this painting, throngs of people and modern streetcars push through the city boulevards at night. Electric lights from street lamps and store windows blaze; around corners, people half-disappear into shadows. In the left foreground, a man sleeps, perhaps dreaming. Above him a distracted nude woman (probably a prostitute) sits framed at a window, while above her haunting figures revel and lean out to ogle the action. Buildings loom over the people below. The scene evokes the frenzy, decadence, and danger of the modern city—the dark side of the years leading up to the “Great War.”

CONSIDER: How this painting suggests the stresses of city life during the years before World War I.



FIGURE 14.5 © Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, NY



Secondary Sources

The Decline of Political Liberalism

F. H. Hinsley

Despite the apparent failures of 1848, political liberalism was at its zenith during the middle of the nineteenth century. By the last two decades of the century it was clearly on the decline or was at least evolving in striking new ways. This

evolution is analyzed in the following selection from *The New Cambridge Modern History* by F. H. Hinsley of Cambridge.

CONSIDER: The causes of the decline of political liberalism; the intellectual or ideological developments that occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century, as reflected by the decline of political liberalism.

SOURCE: F. H. Hinsley, “Introduction,” in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. XI, F. H. Hinsley, ed. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1962), pp. 32–34. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

The politics of the age was distinguished, even in the least authoritarian of states, as much by the growth of authority as by the extension of democracy; and less by the