

stitutions of the Catholic Church. Not surprisingly, the French also faced the steadfast opposition of the Turin's clergy, who continued to exercise a strong influence over the mass of the population in the city. For the laboring classes, in particular, French modernization meant, in the short run, a lower standard of living, increased unemployment, compulsory military conscription, and the loss of the forms of protection that they had previously received through their guilds and paternalistic ties to the aristocracy.

Still these hardships and discontents rarely provoked open revolts or organized resistance to the French regime even after Napoleon's military fortunes began to decline in 1813. Even with the military draft and heavy tax burdens imposed by the emperor's wars, opposition rarely extended beyond small groups of educated young men, who were principally concerned with defending Piedmontese culture. In fact, the French imperial era in Turin and the surrounding territory came to an end without much excitement or disturbances. In the spring of 1814, departing French forces, for instance, encountered little hostility from the local populace, while the arrival of Austrian troops aroused no particular enthusiasm. A convention signed in April by Prince Borghese and representatives of the Savoyard monarchy and the Austrian emperor prepared the way for the orderly retreat of the French back over the Alps later that month. On May 8, 1814, Austrian troops under the command of General Ferdinand von Bubna-Littitz entered Turin. The victorious great powers initially promoted a policy of moderation and compromise by setting up a mixed council of Napoleonic and Savoyard loyalist nobles to guide the transition to a restored monarchical system. The early return of Victor Emanuel I from exile in Sardinia, however, effectively sabotaged hopes of a moderate restoration.

3. *Restoration Turin.*

When the newly restored Savoyard monarch made his triumphant re-entry into Turin on May 20, 1814, even his physical appearance betokened a sweeping rejection of everything associated with the French Revolution and Napoleon and an unadulterated return to the past. Victor Emanuel I and his entourage, recalled Massimo d'Azeglio who stood in Piazza Castello that day, "were all dressed in antiquated style, with powdered hair in pigtails, and eighteenth-century tricorne hats à la Frederick II". Appropriately, the first royal edict, issued the following day, aimed to turn back the clock to the pre-1789 era by abrogating all leg-