

prices above competitive levels. Patent laws facilitate this process by enabling entrepreneurs to earn extra profits by patenting new products and technologies. Although it is true that these entrepreneurs can charge monopolistic prices, it also is true that they invest money in research and development (R&D). The money that entrepreneurs invest in R&D represents the cost of gaining monopoly status, and the extra profits they earn represent a return on the money that they invested in creating their monopoly. Because patents run out, these monopolists must reinvest in research and development to maintain their monopoly status over time. This reinvestment results in long-term technological progress and product innovation that Joseph Schumpeter described as *creative destruction*.

Edwin Chadwick distinguished between competition within a field and competition for a field. Chadwick's research drew a clear line between competition between sellers for customers and competition between sellers for the means to exclude each other. Gordon Tullock revived this issue by arguing that entrepreneurs lobby governments to construct artificial barriers to entry as a means of gaining monopoly control over prices. Labor unions and professional associations like the American Medical Association are examples of resource market monopolies that derive benefits from artificial governmental barriers. These monopolists pay for their privileges; however, in these instances, the resources that the monopolist invests in constructing and maintaining barriers to entry do nothing to enhance long-term progress and prosperity.

In competitive markets, entrepreneurs compete with each other for customers. In monopolistic markets, entrepreneurs compete with each other to either win or maintain monopoly status. In the absence of government-granted privileges, competition enables individuals to benefit from gains from trade and innovation. However, competition does become onerous when individuals compete for special privileges from the government that enable them to charge monopolistic prices without improving the quality of their products or services.

DMK

See also Antitrust; Capitalism; Hayek, Friedrich A.; Interventionism; Labor Unions; Laissez-Faire Policy

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## COMTE, CHARLES (1782–1837)

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François-Louis-Charles Comte was born in Sainte-Enimie in Lozère on August 25, 1782, and he died in Paris on April 13, 1837. He was a journalist; an academic (a professor of natural law); the author of works on law, political economy, and history; a member of the French Parliament; and a key participant in the classical liberal movement in France in the first half of the 19th century.

Comte met the man with whom his name is commonly linked, Charles Dunoyer, in Paris around 1807 when they were both studying law. They later coedited the influential liberal periodical, *Le Censeur* (1814–1815), and its successor, *Le Censeur européen* (1817–1819), which irritated both Napoleon and the restored Bourbon King Louis XVIII by criticizing the authoritarian nature of their regimes. Issues of the journal were seized by the police, and Comte was sentenced to a heavy fine and 2 months' imprisonment. He sought refuge in Switzerland, where he secured an academic post in Lausanne (1820–1823) and then in England (1823–1826). It was while in England that he met Jeremy Bentham. Comte eventually returned to Paris to turn his Swiss lectures on law and economics into the prize-winning book *Traité de législation* (1827), which was to have a profound impact on an entire generation of French liberals, including Frédéric Bastiat.

Comte, with Dunoyer, had discovered liberal political economy as a result of the closure of their journal in 1815. Temporarily without a job, Comte was able to spend his time reading voraciously, and he eventually came across a new edition of Jean-Baptiste Say's classic *Treatise on Political Economy*. As a result of this encounter with Say, Comte not only expanded his primarily political notion of

liberty into one that included an economic and sociological dimension, but also ended up marrying Say's daughter. The new kind of classical liberalism jointly developed by Comte and Dunoyer informs Comte's *Traité de législation* (1827), where he explores, among other things, the class structure of slave societies and the nature of exploitation.

In the later 1820s, Comte became involved in a number of public debates, among them opposing government schemes to heavily subsidize public works to catch up with more economically developed countries such as Britain and defending the National Guard in the face of government efforts to dissolve the citizen militia.

After the July Revolution of 1830, Comte briefly served as the political representative of the Sarthe in the Chamber of Deputies. He resigned his political post to pursue an academic career in the reconstituted Academy of Moral and Political Sciences. Comte edited collections of the works of his father-in-law Say and Thomas Malthus for the liberal publishing firm of Guillaumin. His last substantial work before his death was a lengthy defense of property rights and a history of the evolution of property in *Traité de la propriété* (1834).

DMH

See also Bastiat, Frédéric; Dunoyer, Charles; Free Trade; French Revolution; Say, Jean-Baptiste; Slavery, World

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## CONDORCET, MARQUIS DE (1743–1794)

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Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet, was born in Ribemont, Picardy, in September 1743, and

died in Bourg-la-Reine before reaching the age of 52. He was a mathematician, a philosophe, a friend of d'Alembert, Voltaire, and Turgot, a permanent secretary of the French Academy of Sciences from 1776, and a politician during the French revolutionary period. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1791 and later appointed its president; he then became a member of the Convention in 1792. Condorcet was active in a number of committees that drew up legislation during the Revolution, especially laws relating to public education and constitutional reform. Alas, he became a victim of Jacobin repression when the liberal Girondin group was expelled from the Convention. After a period of hiding in late 1793, during which he wrote his most famous work, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, he was arrested and died under suspicious circumstances. It is possible that he committed suicide or was murdered by the Jacobins.

Condorcet was educated at a Jesuit school in Rheims and received a rigorous scientific education at the College of Navarre of the University of Paris. His initial researches were in the areas of calculus and probability theory, and he later attempted to apply mathematics to the study of human behavior and to the structure of political organizations to create a "social arithmetic of man." His "Essai sur l'application de l'analyse de la probabilité des décisions rendues, la pluralité des voix" ["Essay on the Application of Probability Analysis to Decisions Made by Majority Vote"], published in 1785, was an attempt to show how probability theory could be used to make political decision making more rational and, hence, more enlightened. Condorcet wrote articles on this subject for a *Supplement* to Diderot's *Encyclopedia* several years later.

Condorcet lent his wholehearted support to the attempts by the new controller-general, Turgot, in 1774–1776 to free up the grain trade and deregulate the French economy. Turgot appointed him to the post of *inspecteur des monnaies* in 1774, and he wrote numerous pamphlets defending laissez-faire reforms, such as the abolition of forced labor (the *corvée*) and seigneurial dues. His "Vie de M. Turgot" (1786) is a spirited defense of Turgot and of the continuing need for free market policies despite Turgot's failure to overcome the entrenched vested interests that opposed reforms in the French economy.

Condorcet also advocated other enlightened reforms, such as a restructuring of the criminal justice system, the granting of civic rights to Protestants, and the abolition of slavery. With his wife, Sophie de Grouchy, whom he had married in 1786, Condorcet's home proved an important salon for the liberal elite of Paris where contemporary issues were discussed, as well as the progress of the new American republic and the future role of provincial assemblies in a politically reformed France.

During the early phases of the French Revolution, Condorcet joined other moderate liberal reformers in the