

History B357-Spang

# Modern France: Society, Culture, Politics

15 September 2008

## War, Peace, Empire

Arc de Triomphe (Place de l'Etoile)  
Paris (1806-1836)



## Key points from last week

Revolution replaces “privilege” with “rights” (including property rights)

“Rights” understood to be natural and universal; the nation is sovereign

What is the nation? –according to Sieyès: productive individuals living under a single set of laws

from spring 1789-Sept. 1793, popular violence and protest contributes to Revolution’s growing radicalization

French First Republic declared in context of international and civil war

French republicanism tends, in aftermath of Revolution, to be strongly centralizing (as was the monarchy) and anti-clerical

fear of violent revolution as key feature of nineteenth-century European conservatism

revolutionary violence: popular crowd action vs. state “terror”

war and routinization of violence

causes of war: long-term transformation of European state system  
revolution as “religious” warfare  
Bonaparte and cult of glory

sources of Bonaparte’s/Napoleon’s authority:

meritocratic legend

careful image management

(conquerer of Europe and  
the ancient world)

preserves some republican forms

what happens to content?



Antoine-Jean Gros, *Napoleon on the Battlefield at Eylau* (1808)



# The Terror

September 1793-July 1794 (9 thermidor II)

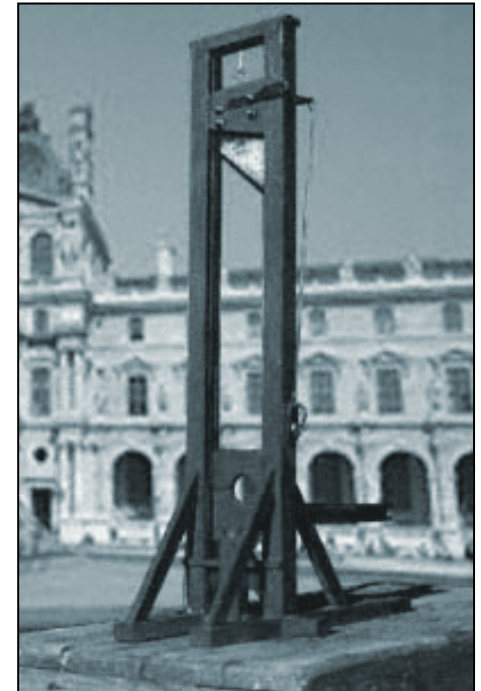
Law on Suspects—anyone suspected of opposing the Republic can be jailed indefinitely

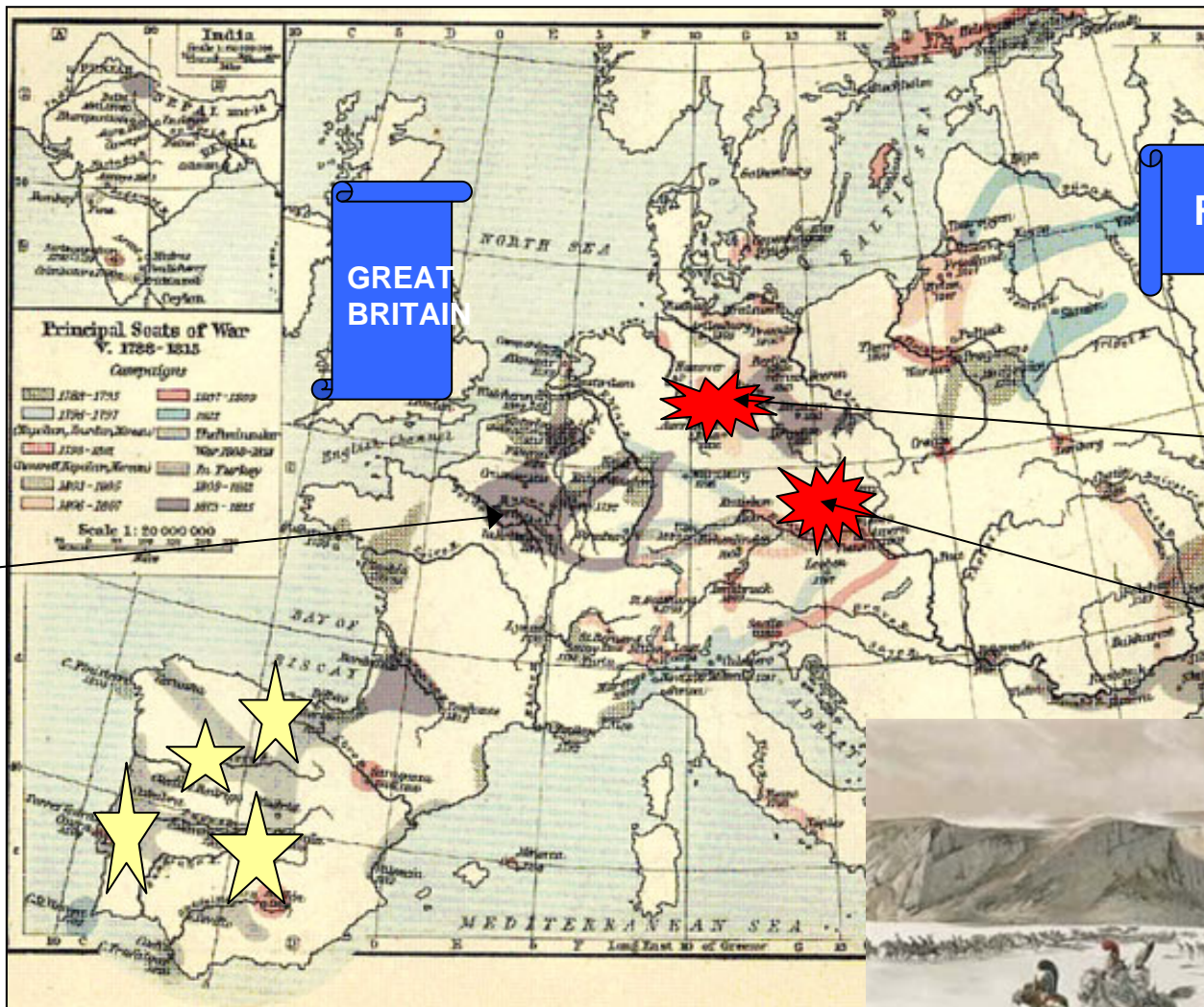
Representatives on Mission sent from the Convention to the rest of France to combat counter-revolutionaries

General Maximum—wage-and-price limits (attempt at complete state control of economy)

(10 Oct. 1793) government declared “revolutionary” (i.e., extra-constitutional) until peace is achieved

approx. 500,000 people jailed in ten months; 17,000 executed; 12,000 die in prison; 11,000-12,000 executions without trial; maybe as many as 100,000 deaths in civil war in the Vendée





Paris

GREAT  
BRITAIN

Russia

Jena

Austerlitz



using cannons to shatter  
ice as Russians retreat  
at Austerlitz (Sloane,  
*Life of Napoleon* 1896)

Map from a 1911 school atlas, showing Principal Seats of War,  
1788-1815

# Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars

Enormous armies France in 1793:

750,000 men in arms and equal number in munitions,  
other support roles; first ever *universal* draft;

1813: 6% of Prussian population in military;

British army six times larger than it was in 1789

20% of French people born, 1790-1795, were killed in wars

Total Military Deaths: 2.5-3.5 million; civilians: .5-3 million

Popular resistance in Spain (*guerilla*), Prussia  
("War of Liberation"), and Russia

## KEY DATES

1792-1815 series of wars between France and rest of Europe

1795-1797 Bonaparte's Italian Campaign; "Sister Republics"  
established in Italy; today's Belgium, Switzerland, and western  
Germany (Rhineland) claimed as part of France

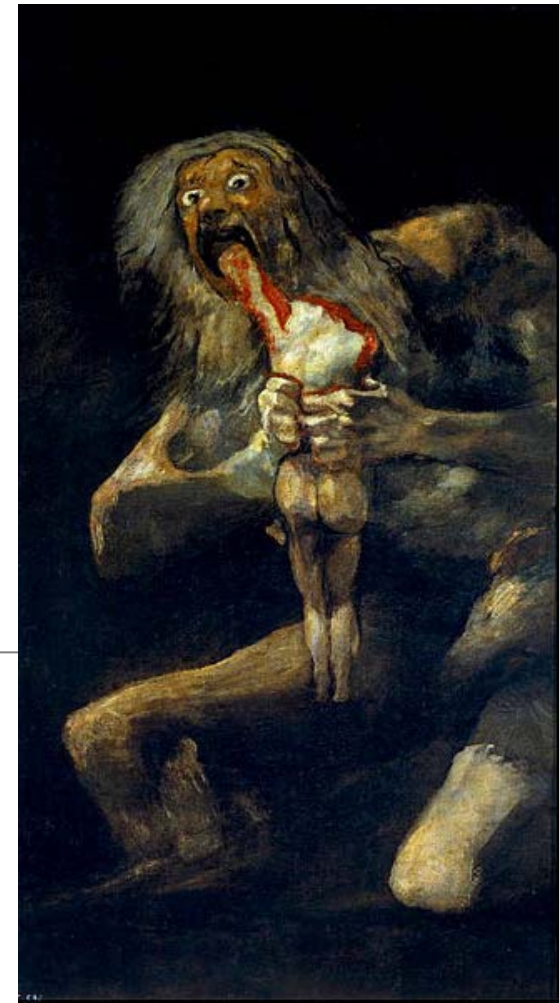
1798-1799 Bonaparte ordered to invade England; goes to Egypt  
military failure, symbolic success

Oct. 1805 Austerlitz ("Battle of Three Emperors")-French forces  
defeat Austro-Russian army and effectively end Holy Roman Empire

1806 French defeat Prussian army at Jena

1807 Treaty of Tilsit-Russia becomes French ally

1808 Napoleon's brother established as "king of Spanish"



Francisco Goya,  
*Saturn Devouring  
his Child* (1819)

All political and civil revolutions have been confined to a single country. The French Revolution had no country... It united and divided men, in spite of law, traditions, characters, or language; it converted enemies into fellow countrymen, and brothers into foes... No similar feature can be discovered in another political revolution... But it occurs in certain religious revolutions. ... The French Revolution, though political, assumed the guise and tactics of a religious revolution.

The French Revolution ...dealt with the citizen in the abstract, independent of particular social organizations, just as religions deal with mankind in general, independent of time and place. It inquired not of the particular rights of French citizens, but what were the general rights and duties of mankind in reference to political concerns. It was thus by divesting itself of all that was peculiar to one people or time, and by reverting to natural principles of social order and government, that it became intelligible to all...

By seeming to tend to the regeneration of the human race...it roused passions such as the most violent political revolutions had been incapable of awakening.

Alexis de Tocqueville  
*The Old Regime and the French Revolution*  
(1856)

# Napoleon Bonaparte

- 1769 born “Napoleone Buonaparte” in Corsica  
1779-1784 attends Royal Military School (on scholarship)
- Dec. 1793 central in re-taking Toulon from the British; promoted to General  
Oct. 1795 commands troops that put down royalist uprising in Paris
- Jan. 1796 named commander-in-chief of Italian Army  
1798-1799 Egyptian campaign
- 9 November 1799 (18 brumaire VIII) military/constitutional *coup*  
brings Bonaparte to power as part of “Consulate”
- February 1800 Referendum confirms Bonaparte as “First Consul”  
August 1802 Referendum makes him “Consul for Life”  
May 1804 Referendum makes him “Emperor Napoleon”
- 1807-1808 French Empire extends to its largest  
1812 attempted invasion of Russia  
1814 Napoleon abdicates; sent into exile in Elba
- 1815 Napoleon returns to rule for “Hundred Days”; defeated at Waterloo,  
imprisoned on St. Helena
- 1821 dies in St. Helena;  
1840 remains returned to France





*Levée en masse* [general draft], 13 August 1793

Henceforth, until the enemies have been driven from the territory of the Republic, the French people are in permanent requisition.

The young men shall go to battle, the married men shall forge arms and transport provisions; the women

shall make tents and clothes, and shall serve in the hospitals; the children shall turn old linens into bandages; the old men shall repair to public places to stimulate the courage of the warriors and preach the unity of the Republic and hatred of kings...



Guillaume Guillon, called Lethiere, *The Fatherland in Danger* (1799)



# General Bonaparte, commander of the Republic's armies

Some of Bonaparte's victories in the first Italian Campaign



Gros, *Bonaparte at Arcola* (1801)



Egyptian campaign 1798-1799



Gros, *Bonaparte in the Pest-house at Jaffa* (1804)

# Bonaparte in Egypt

“Soldiers! You have come to these lands in order to pull them from barbarism, to bring civilization to the Orient, and to free this beautiful part of the world from English control. We are going into battle. Remember that from the top of these monuments, forty centuries are watching you...”

Bonaparte to the French troops, July 1798.





Antoine-Jean Gros, *Napoleon visiting the plague stricken at Jaffa, 1799 (1804)*, detail



Gros, *First Consul Bonaparte* (1802)

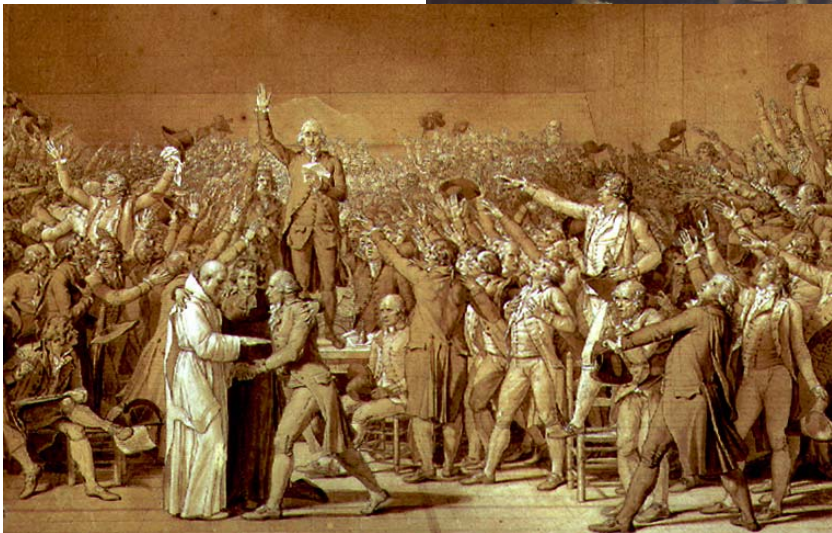


David, *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*, 1804  
(1804-1807)

# Revolutionary and Imperial Oaths of Loyalty



Jacques-Louis David, *Distribution of the Eagles* (1810)



David, *Tennis Court Oath* (detail) 1791



David, *Napoleon in his Study* (1812)

## Civil Code [*Code Napoléon*] and Modern France

confirms Revolution in:

abolition of guilds  
religious toleration  
standardized weights and measures  
single legal system for entire nation  
property to be divided equally among  
all sons (abolishes the first born's  
privilege in inheritance)

undoes Revolution by:

prohibiting divorce  
extending legal equality only to men  
requiring workers to carry *livret*  
(identity papers and letters of  
reference)