5 Sept. 2012

War, Peace, Empire

Arc de Triomphe (Place de l'Etoile)
Paris (1806-1836)
# French Regimes since 1792

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When is modern France?
Louis XVI as king, citizen, and cadaver

To arms citizens
Form your battalions
March, march
Let impure blood
Water our furrows!

Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle,
The Marseillaise, 1792.

Background: First French Republic created among violence (execution Jan. 20, 1793)
The Advent of “Total War,” 1789-1799?

- French forces by mid-1794: 750,000+
- Munitions workers: 5,000 or more (145,000 guns/year)
- Military deaths, 1794-1796: 200,000
- 1793-1794: 84 generals executed
- 352 generals dismissed

Altar of the Republic, dedicated to the National Convention (Sicard, 1913) in the Panthéon
Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars

**Enormous armies**
- 1793 (France) first ever *universal* draft;
- 1813: 6% of Prussian population in military;
  - British army 600% the size 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

**KEY DATES**
- 1792-1815 series of wars between France and rest of Europe
- 1795-1797 Bonaparte’s Italian Campaign; “Sister Republics” created
- 1798-1799 Bonaparte’s invasion of Egypt
- 1805 Austerlitz (“Battle of Three Emperors”)—French forces defeat Austro-Russian army and end Holy Roman Empire
- 1812 Napoleon invades Russia and retreats
- 1814 Napoleon abdicates; sent into exile in Elba
- 1815 Napoleon returns; rules for Hundred Days; defeated at Waterloo

 Francisco Goya, *Saturn Devouring his Child* (oil painting; 1819) Prado Museum (Madrid, Spain)
War and revolution: how are they related?

From First Republic (1792-1804) to First Empire (1804-1815)

Keys to Bonaparte’s successes:
- meritocratic legend
- new strategies and techniques
- careful image management

Napoleon and the revolutionary legacy:
- preserves some forms
- what happens to content?
“The French nation, content to be free, has no desire to engage in any war; It wishes to live with all nations in the fraternity ordered by nature.”
Robespierre, May 1790.

“May all nations be as free as we wish to be and there will be no war.”
Duke de Lévis, May 1790.

“The French nation renounces the undertaking of any war aimed at conquest and will never employ its forces against the liberty of any people.”
National Assembly decree, May 1790.

Aristocracy Destroyed by the National Guard (1790?)

War and revolution: a changing relationship
“You would do better to join the army”?

1789-1791  idealistic renunciation of war; complicated by Flight to Varennes

1791-1793  Girondins (Brissot, Roland, Clavière) argue for war against Austria and the émigrés; war declared, April 1792

1793-1794  National Convention defends Republic from its “enemies”

1794-1799  Thermidorean Convention and the Directory use military force to repress domestic popular violence (counter-revolution or continued revolution?); see international revolution as tool of war
Levée en masse, August 1793

From this moment until that in which the enemy shall have been driven from the soil of the Republic, all Frenchmen are in permanent requisition for the service of the armies. The young men shall go to battle; the married men shall forge arms and transport provisions; the women shall make tents and clothing and shall serve in the hospitals; the children shall turn old linen into lint; the old men shall betake themselves to the public places in order to arouse the courage of warriors and to preach the hatred of kings and the unity of the Republic.
Napoleon in Popular Culture Today

First Republic to First Empire
Napoleone Buonaparte

son of Corsican aristocrats

attended Military Academy on scholarship; nearly took commission in Ottoman Turkish army

organized revolutionary club in Ajaccio (Corsica)

refused when ordered to the Vendée

1795 helped put down royalist uprising in Paris

1796 Army of Italy

1797 Peace of Campo Formio—rejects civilian instructions; gives Venice to Austria

fructidor V (Sept 1797)—sends forces to support purging of royalists and moderates elected in May
The eyes of Europe and the world are fixed more than even on the French Republic… but in Paris, which was long ago delivered to factionalism and the spirit of parties… writers are too often only the slaves of powerful men. All facts are distorted to the profit of those who speculate on lies, and truth searches in vain for an asylum.

In Milan, by contrast, where there are fewer people and the same plots do not exist… the republican observer can think calmly and present the sacred flame of moderation that should shine across the universe… Only this spirit of moderation and fraternity can destroy those memories of past misfortunes which are the source of division and conflict.
“Battle of the Pyramids,” from Histoire des armées françaises (1835)
French Army of the Orient attacked Mamelouk Egyptian forces, 3 thermidor VI (21 July 1798)
Bonaparte in Egypt: in the decorative arts
Thomas Hope, *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration* (1807).

Egyptian Revival: in England and New England
“Bonaparte gives the tricolor sash to an Egyptian bey”

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

Bonaparte in Egypt or, how to disobey orders, abandon your soldiers, and still be a hero
18th of Brumaire Year VIII (November 9, 1799)

18 brumaire  Directory’s legislative bodies (the Councils) persuaded to leave Paris to avoid uprising; they are “protected” by Bonaparte’s forces

19 brumaire  • members of Council demand evidence of plot
Bonaparte: “Don’t forget! I walk with the God of war and the God of victory…” –attacked, but saved by army
• many legislators flee in fear; army gathers roughly a hundred of them who vote to dissolve both houses and end the Directory

22 brumaire  new constitution promulgated: creates Consulate, does not include a Declaration of Rights
The First Consul

Nov. 1799    Bonaparte leads *coup* in name of “defending” Republic

Jan. 1800    opposition journalists shut down

1800        plebiscite to ratify constitution (75% voter abstention)

May 1802    Bonaparte named “Consul for Life” ratified by plebiscite

1804        declaration of Empire ratified by plebiscite (50% turnout)

From Republic to Empire: Was the Consulate a republican form of government?
“The Government of the French Republic recognizes that the Roman, Catholic and Apostolic religion is the religion of the great majority of French citizens. His Holiness likewise recognizes that this same religion has derived and in this moment again expects the greatest benefit and grandeur from the establishment of the Catholic worship in France and from the personal profession of it which the Consuls of the Republic make.”

- Maintained freedom of religion
- Bishops to be named by the First Consul
- Government to pay bishops and priests’ salaries
- Church gave up all claims to *biens nationaux*
- Bishops to take loyalty oath to constitution

Concordat of 1801*

* ratified in France, 1802

Republic to Empire: Bonaparte, the peace maker?
“The success and longevity of any political system depends on government stability… In our present happy situation, where the French people possess all the rights they sought in the Revolution of 1789, only uncertainty for the future still troubles the State.

What guarantee can we offer? Heredity of power in a family whom the Revolution has made illustrious,… heredity in the family of a leader who was the Revolution’s first soldier before becoming its first magistrate; a leader whose civil qualities alone would have eminently distinguished him had he not filled the entire world with the sound of his weapons and the brilliance of his victories”

Motion to introduce hereditary government, April 1804.
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

undoes Revolution by:
- prohibiting divorce
- extending legal equality only to men
- requiring workers to carry *livret* (identity papers and letters of reference)
Revolutionary and Imperial Oaths of Loyalty

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

David, *Tennis Court Oath (detail)* 1791

Revolution to Empire: Merit and Virtue
The Empire and the Invasion of Russia, 1812

Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, Mediator of the Swiss Confederation, and Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine

King of Naples, Marshal Joachim Murat (married to Caroline Bonaparte)

King of Spain, Joseph Bonaparte

Grand Duchess of Tuscany, Elisa Bonaparte

King of Westphalia, Jerome Bonaparte

Imperial “Great Army”
- 200,000 French troops
- 100,000 from annexed territories of Empire
- 160,000 from Confederation of Rhine
- 90,000 Poles and Lithuanians

Russian Army approx. 900,000

An invasion too far: Russia
Charles Joseph Minard (retired inspector of bridges),
“Figurative Map of the losses suffered by the French Army in Russia, 1812-1813” (1869)

550,000 imperial troops marched on Russia
less than 25,000 returned

an invasion too far: Russia
The First Empire was legitimated through a combination of:
- military conquest
- rule of law
- a culture of merit ("careers open to talent")
- hereditary rule in a single family

Are these compatible?

Can a regime built on military conquest be stable at peace?

Napoleonic legend and Napoleonic legacy