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President

Wayne Hanley
Editor-in-Chief



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THE JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL NAPOLEONIC SOCIETY

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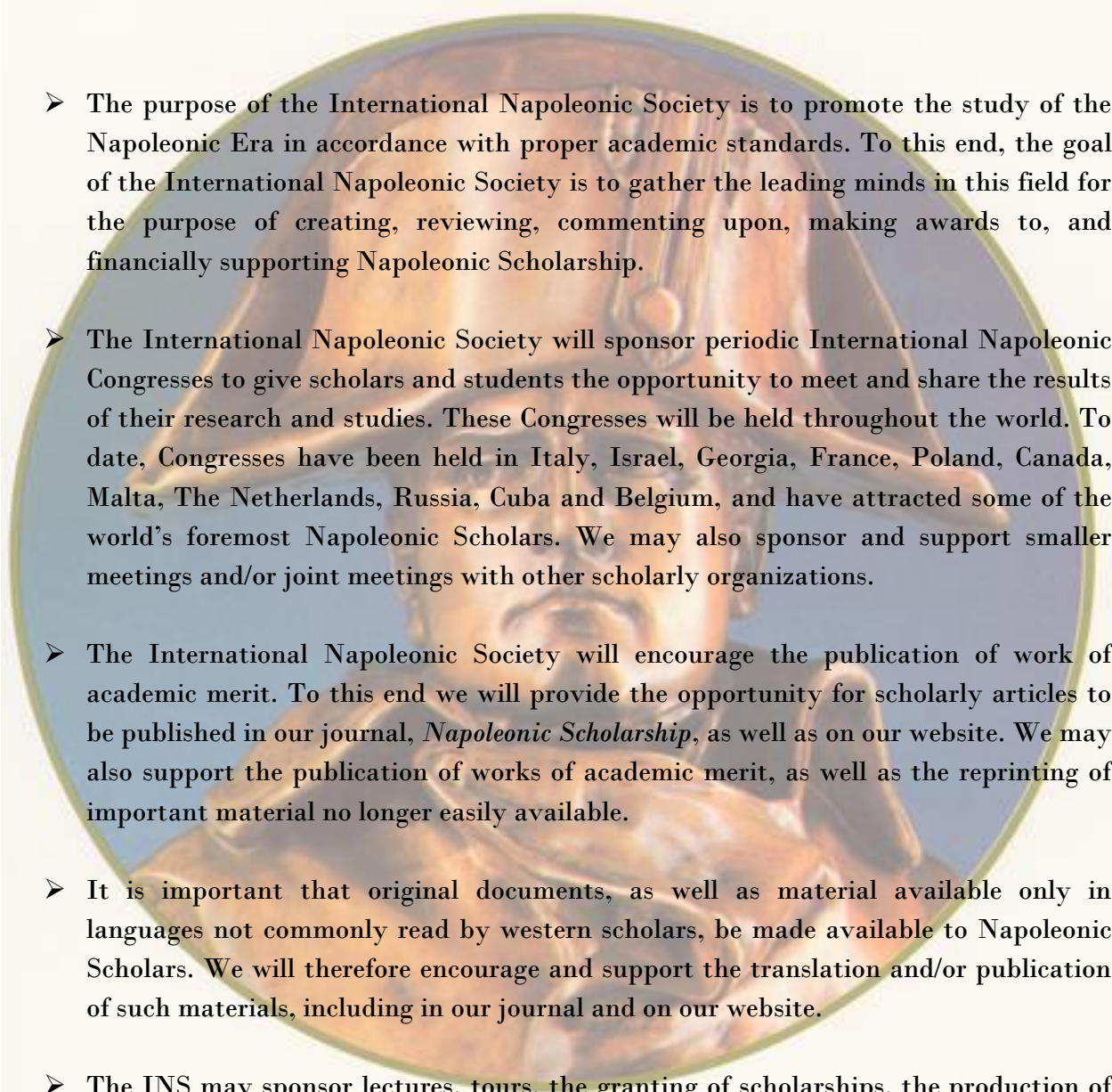
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INTERNATIONAL NAPOLEONIC SOCIETY AIMS AND GOALS

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- The purpose of the International Napoleonic Society is to promote the study of the Napoleonic Era in accordance with proper academic standards. To this end, the goal of the International Napoleonic Society is to gather the leading minds in this field for the purpose of creating, reviewing, commenting upon, making awards to, and financially supporting Napoleonic Scholarship.
 - The International Napoleonic Society will sponsor periodic International Napoleonic Congresses to give scholars and students the opportunity to meet and share the results of their research and studies. These Congresses will be held throughout the world. To date, Congresses have been held in Italy, Israel, Georgia, France, Poland, Canada, Malta, The Netherlands, Russia, Cuba and Belgium, and have attracted some of the world's foremost Napoleonic Scholars. We may also sponsor and support smaller meetings and/or joint meetings with other scholarly organizations.
 - The International Napoleonic Society will encourage the publication of work of academic merit. To this end we will provide the opportunity for scholarly articles to be published in our journal, *Napoleonic Scholarship*, as well as on our website. We may also support the publication of works of academic merit, as well as the reprinting of important material no longer easily available.
 - It is important that original documents, as well as material available only in languages not commonly read by western scholars, be made available to Napoleonic Scholars. We will therefore encourage and support the translation and/or publication of such materials, including in our journal and on our website.
 - The INS may sponsor lectures, tours, the granting of scholarships, the production of exhibitions and other displays, and other academic and/or cultural activities as deemed appropriate.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



We are pleased to present the 2015 INS Journal. I know that you will find it, as always, full of outstanding articles on various aspects of Napoleonic History. Wayne Hanley, our new editor-in-chief, has done an outstanding job in getting excellent papers from a wide range of scholars.

This journal is notable for another reason as well. From now on, the journal will be produced as a PDF journal and be distributed using website links to our Fellows via email. In addition to being cheaper than a traditional printed journal, this format allows for a far wider distribution of the journal with no additional cost. For example, we are providing the journal to all members of the Napoleonic Historical Society, and will make it available to other interested groups, either via email or by posting it on various websites. As always, it will be posted on the INS website, but it will now be posted on the NHS website and several Facebook pages as well. This will give our authors—and Napoleonic history—a much wider audience than before.

We also welcome our new Production Editor, Edna Markham. She has completely upgraded our ability to communicate with our Fellows via mass emails, and has also upgraded the production of the journal. Her technical skills are an invaluable addition to our team.

We plan to stabilize the release of new journals to a consistent one each year. We urge you to send submissions for future issues.

Finally, we call your attention to our upcoming congress in Dublin and to future congresses. These congresses are outstanding opportunities to meet and mingle with scholars from around the world. We encourage you to attend and to strongly consider submitting a paper proposal.

J. David Markham, President

Knight of the Order of the French Academic Palms

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.



Thank you for your patience as I develop my editorial skills. I hope to improve with every issue, as I continue in the footsteps of my predecessors in making quality research on the Napoleonic era accessible to a broader audience of scholars and amateurs alike.

This issue opens with Susan Conner's fascinating look at the cadaver trade in 18th-century and Napoleonic Paris and its impact on the professionalization of surgeons. Next David Robinson examines how national biases influenced coverage given by the British, French and Dutch newspapers of the 1799 Anglo-Russian invasion of Holland. Two papers examine the French "empire" and imperial policies beyond Europe during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras: Pouyan Tabasinejad examines Bonaparte's evolving discourse with Egyptians in light of cultural differences while Sheragim Jenabzadeh discusses the little studied roles of the Ottoman and Persian East in French geopolitical machinations. In her article on the Battle of Rivoli, geographer Edna Mueller demonstrates how modern, accessible technologies (like Google Earth) can give historians a greater understanding of the influence of terrain and climate on military history. Nicholas Stark analyzes the often-overlooked impact of the French Revolution in Ireland in his contribution on the attempts of the United Irishmen to foment revolution. In his article on Napoleonic diplomacy in Switzerland, Wayne Hanley examines the role of General Michel Ney's mission to avert a civil war in that country during the crisis of 1802-03. Next two articles explore the ironies of the Peninsular War: Dennis Potts investigates the Convention of Cintra which despite initial British political frustration, the treaty set in motion a chain of events leading to Anglo-Iberian victory, and Maria Zozaya Montes's case study of two Spanish prisoners of war show that despite official vilification of the French by the Spanish, the treatment of the prisoners by French villagers resulted in mutual respect and life-long friendships. And finally, John Stanley traces the key role Marshal Poniatowski not only in the affairs of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw and Polish hopes for an independent state, but also his indispensable role during the campaign of 1813.

Wayne Hanley, Editor-in-Chief

The International Napoleonic Society hosts academic International Napoleonic Congresses around the world. These congresses attract scholars and students from a wide range of backgrounds, giving them the opportunity to meet and share the results of their research. Here are Congresses we have hosted in the past as well as those planned for the near future:

Europe Discovers Napoleon: 1793 – 1804
Cittadella of Alessandra Italy 21–26 June 1997

Napoleon and the French in Egypt and the Holy Land 1799 – 1801
In cooperation with the Israeli Society for Napoleonic Research
Tel Aviv – Yafo – Jerusalem – Acco 4–10 July 1999

Napoleon's Campaigns and Heritage
In cooperation with the Napoleonic Society of Georgia
Tbilisi, Georgia 12–18 June 2000

Imperial Glory: Austerlitz and Europe in 1805
In cooperation with the city of Dinard, France
Dinard, France 9–16 July 2005

Napoleon and Poland 1807 – 2007
In cooperation with the
Slupsk Pedagogical Academy and the Polish Historical Society
Slupsk, Poland 1–5 July 2007

Napoleon and the Mediterranean
In cooperation with the City of Ajaccio, the General Council of Southern Corsica, and
the Territorial Collective of Corsica
Ajaccio, Corsica, France 7–11 July 2008

Napoleon, Europe and the World
In cooperation with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
Montréal, Québec, Canada 8–12 June 2009

Napoleon and the Transition to the Modern World
San Anton, Malta, 12–16 July 2010

Napoleonic Europe at its Peak
In cooperation with the Foundation Top of Holland (City marketing Den Helder),
The City of Den Helder, The Royal Netherlands Navy and Fort Kijkduin
Den Helder, The Netherlands 4–8 July 2011

Napoleon's 1812 Russian Campaign in World History: A Retrospective View
In cooperation with the Institute of World History (Russian Academy of Science)
Russian State University for the Humanities, Association Dialogue Franco-Russe
State Borodino War and History Museum and Reserve
Moscow, Russian Federation 9-13 July 2012

Old World, New World: Momentous Events of 1812-1814
Toronto, Ontario, Canada 29 July-2 August 2013

Napoleon and Revolutions Around the World
Havana, Cuba
In association with *La Muséo Napoleonico* and the *Office of the Historian of the City of Havana* 7-11 July 2014

Endings and Beginnings: The World in 1815
Brussels, Belgium
In cooperation with Vesalius College, Vrije Universiteit Brussel 6-10 July 2015

Shades of 1916: Ireland in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe
Dublin, Ireland
In cooperation with the Government of Ireland, Trinity College Dublin and The Napoleon Society of Ireland
11-16 July 2016

Napoleon's Final Days
Jamestown, St Helena
In cooperation with Enterprise St. Helena and the French Consul to St. Helena July, 2017

Oslo, Norway
July, 2018

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OPENING UP A FEW CADAVERS: THE MARKETPLACE IN BODIES IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AND NAPOLEONIC PARIS

by Susan P. Conner

“On 23 March 1782, the most famous experts in hygiene and chemistry gather in front of the Hôtel de la Grenade in the rue de la Parcheminerie. The cesspool is to be cleaned out,” according to Jean Noël Hallé, who later held the first chair in public hygiene in France. He continued, “The fatal character of its effluvia is well known. Moreover, the landlady is certain that medical students have buried beneath the feces arms, legs, and other parts of the human body by the bucketful.”¹ Other writers of the Eighteenth Century had also chronicled body parts, “fetid exhalations,” and the “putrefying vapors” which ultimately produced diseases, malignancies, and death.²

¹ This account is based on J. N. Hallé’s account in *Histoire et Mémoires de la Société Royale de Médecine*, 10 (1789) cited in Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge, 1986), 2.

² See especially Félix Pascalis Ouvrière’s *An Exposition of the Dangers of Internment in Cities: Illustrated by an Account of the Funeral Rites and Customs..., civil statutes, and municipal regulations; and by chemical and physical examples, chiefly from the works of Vicq d’Azyr* (New York, 1923). For a fictional account, see Andrew Miller’s *Pure* (New York: Europa Editions, 2012), which deals with Les Innocents cemetery, its move on the eve of the French Revolution, and the residents who lived within its view and its noxious emanations.

Louis-Sébastien Mercier, that ubiquitous observer of everyday life, had issued an equally graphic account of Paris. In the populous areas of the capital near the charnel houses of the churches, among the slaughterhouses, and along the gutters, an “air méphitique” circulated; it was filled with pestilence. Ultimately, it was a killing air.³ In his multi-volume *Tableau de Paris*, Mercier recounted a world of medical professors and practitioners who made deals with grave diggers and carriage drivers. For 10 or 12 francs, for example, an anatomist could supply his *amphithéâtre de dissection* or *cabinet* with a corpse, or he could resell it for ten times that amount. Mercier also told stories of surgery students who engaged boldly in body snatching, and he reflected on the vile nature of a city in which human remains could be found mixed with the bones of animals in Parisian sewers, latrines, gutters, and waterways.⁴ What he saw was a veritable commerce in bodies.

More recently when Michel Foucault analyzed the linkages between pathological anatomy and the Enlightenment-spawned medical spirit of the Eighteenth Century, Foucault titled

³ Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, nouvelle édition (Amsterdam, 1782) 1: 127-29.

⁴ Mercier, 1: 258-59.

his chapter simply “Open up a few corpses.” It is an image not so far from Mercier’s. The end of the century was obsessed with the fetid, the putrid, and the morbid.⁵ It was a period, in fact, of “muddled” meaning as scientific experimentation met popular and bourgeois diversion head on. Mesmerism became a parlor game, medical schools became preoccupied with anatomical studies, and the police feared an upsurge in grave robbing. Purveyors of everything from nostrums to anti-venereal chocolates set up their wares on street corners and in carnivals, and authors of scientific tracts sought to define “actual death” from “latent” death so that no comatose person would ever awaken under an anatomist-surgeon’s scalpel.⁶ Furthermore, the medical profession was in a state of flux as physicians, surgeons, pharmacists, barber-surgeon-wigmakers and the counterpart charlatans and quacks all vied for various forms of recognition and privilege. Simply speaking, there was a fascination with bodies.

⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: an Archaeology of Medical Perception* (New York, 1994). See also the works of Arlette Farge, Alain Corbin, and Jacques Guilleme, “Le malsain et l’économie de la nature,” *XVIIIe siècle*, 9 (1977): 61-68.

⁶ See, in particular, the story of “the Living Corpse” in Nicholas Restif de la Bretonne, *Les Nuits de Paris or the Nocturnal Spectator* (New York, 1964), 86-88; and the story of Père Victor of Chateaudun in the *Correspondance inedite de la Comtesse de Sabran et du Chevalier de Boufflers, 1778-1788* (Paris, 1985), 116. Other stories are collected in the Archives Nationales, hereafter A.N., (Paris), F⁸⁹² (11^b).

In spite of the confusion of the century, it was “in the full light of dissection,” Foucault continued, that the activities of the century progressed. “There was no longer a need to perform anatomical black masses”; few hindrances to the exploration of medical knowledge existed; and “there was no shortage of corpses..., no need to rob graves.”⁷ Evidence, however, belies Foucault’s last point. The century that changed the relationship of the living to the dead, that spawned the expansion of pathological anatomy, and that encouraged the educated and the curious to take an interest in the body as a mechanism, also encouraged a marketplace in bodies. In spite of what Foucault asserted, corpses were in short supply, grave-robbing was commonplace, a cadaver literature that was not entirely fictional existed, and fame and fortune could be borne on the sinews of the dead. As policing changed, not just living individuals—but bodies and odors—fell more fully under the law. Whether it meant moving cemeteries to the fringe of Paris, monitoring sewers, or reconsidering the government’s role in public hygiene, bodies had become a commodity. After the Revolution and in the emerging Napoleonic state, to open up a few cadavers became an issue of social control.

⁷ Foucault, *Birth of the Clinic*, 125.

Dissection and Privilege in Eighteenth-Century Paris

Dissections of human bodies had been conducted in Paris as far back as the fifteenth century, both in hospitals and as part of surgical instruction.⁸ While lessons on anatomy were rare at that time, when they were presented, the associated surgical procedures were overseen by a physician of the Faculté de Médecine whose profession was considered by tradition and by law to be among the highest status within the realm, i.e., among the “liberal arts.” Those operations, which were conducted on a limited number of cadavers or criminals which the Faculté was supplied from executions, followed a rigorous pattern. First there was the legal acquisition of the bodies, then the scheduling of demonstrations. Bodies were opened by a surgeon under the gaze of apprentice surgeons and barber-surgeon-wigmakers who sat on benches of a tiered lecture hall. There a physician from the Faculté de Médecine droned on mostly in Latin, completely separated from the process of dissection but in charge of verbally conveying its “mysteries” to the assembled students.⁹

⁸ Dr. Gannal, “Cours d’anatomie au Jardin du Roi,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’histoire de Paris*, 20 (1893): 21-24; and Ernest Wichersheimer, “Les premières dissections à la Faculté de Médecine de Paris,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’histoire de Paris* 37 (1910): 163.

⁹ Toby Gelfand, “The ‘Paris Manner’ of Dissection: Student Anatomical Dissection in Early 18th-

There should be no surprise that for centuries an interminable war had existed in Paris between the surgeons of Saint-Côme (which was the leading *confrérie* made up predominantly of master-surgeons in Paris) and the Paris Faculté de Médecine (physicians). Without legal authority to obtain cadavers, since the dean of the medical faculty dispersed all bodes, the surgeons of Saint-Côme could not give autonomous anatomy lectures. The only interlude to the war between surgeons and physicians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was momentary and partial: the *confrérie* agreed to pay one-third of the costs of the lessons, including costs of procurement of bodies so that lessons in pathological anatomy might be held more frequently, benefitting both physicians and surgeons.¹⁰

century Paris,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 46, no. 2 (1972): 109; and Wichersheimer, “Les Premières Dissections,” 168-169.

¹⁰ Arrêt du Parlement, 11 April 1551. See also Pierre Valléry-Radot, “Organisation de la Dissection à Paris—Quatre Siècles d’histoire,” *Presse Médicale*, no. 18-19 (25-28 February 1942), 235. See also the forty-two volume collection in the Bibliothèque nationale, titled *Recueil de Pièces et Mémoires sur les Contestations entre les Médecines et des Chirurgiens de Paris*.

The rivalry between surgeons and physicians, however, was by no means extinguished by their reconciliation over cost sharing. As the number of medical students (particularly surgeons) increased, and Paris became a center for anatomical

patients of hospitals were not safe. Records of the Hôtel Dieu, among others, contained the case of an infant, still living, who was spirited away and then dropped by kidnapper-anatomists when they believed they were in peril of capture.¹²



studies, the demand for instruction and the competition over cadavers increased as well. The execution of a criminal at the Place de Grève, for example, nearly always resulted in brawling, accompanied by grievous injuries to the guards, as any number of people fought over the corpse “armed with swords and handguns, seconded by lackeys and hired hands,” attempting to steal bodies in broad daylight.¹¹ According to testimony, even

By the Eighteenth Century, despite of problems and rivalries, pathological anatomy had moved beyond the restrictive structure which had been controlled by physicians.¹³ Because there was a plethora of students, increasing interest among the learned groups of society, and profits could be considerable, at least six avenues for research and instruction in anatomy could be found in the years immediately prior to the

¹¹ Alexandre Parent-Duchâtelet, “De l’influence et de l’assainissement des salles de dissection. Recherches pour déterminer jusqu’à quel point les emanations putrides provenant de la decomposition des matières animales peuvent contribuer à l’altération des substances alimentaires,” *Annales d’hygiène Publique et de Médecine Légale*, 5 (1831): 247.

¹² “Enlèvement d’un malade encore vivant pour en faire la dissection,” *La revue hospitalière de France*, 10-11 (August-September 1946): 284-85.

¹³ Ruth Richardson, *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* (New York, 1987), 35; Terence Murphy, “Transformation of traditional medical culture under the Old Regime,” *Historical Reflections*, 16, no. 2-3 (1989), 330.

Revolution: Under the direction of the Faculté de Médecine, at the School of Surgery of Saint Côme,¹⁴ at the royal botanical gardens (Jardin du Roi) where human as well as botanical dissections took place,¹⁵ at the *Collège royal*, in major hospitals where students frequently had to purchase their own cadavers,¹⁶ and in private *cabinets de dissection*. Anatomy demonstrations flourished—whether they were public or private. Dissections were well attended, even fashionable; they had become a passion.

¹⁴ The amphitheater of the *Confrérie de Chirurgiens de Saint-Côme* had been built in 1694 by Joubert to house the anatomy dissections of the master surgeons of Paris. Under the domed structure, nearly two hundred students could observe the anatomical demonstrations which took place as part of their education. Other parts of the building were used for thesis defenses. When the building proved to be far too small for instruction of the growing number of students of surgery, Louis XV hired Goudoin to build a much larger amphitheatre in the center of the new neo-classical Académie de Chirurgie which was opened in 1775. Both of the amphitheatres still exist and may be entered from the current rue de l'Ecole de Médecine just south of its diagonal intersection with the Boulevard Saint-Germain. Architectural plates of the later amphitheatre may be found in the engravings collection of the Musée Carnavalet. See also Pierre Vallery-Radot, "La Faculté de Médecine de Paris: ses richesses artistiques." Musée Carnavalet, Estampes, Ecole de Médecine—Topo 106^F.

¹⁵ Nicholas de Lamare, *Traité de Police où l'on Trouvera l'histoire de son Etablissement, les Fonctions, et les Prerogatives de ses Magistrats; tous les lois et tous les réglemens*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1713).

See also B.N. fonds Delamare, ms. 21737, folio 141.

¹⁶ François Quesnay, *Examen Impartial* (Paris, 1748), as cited in Gelfand, "The 'Paris manner,'" 103.

Cadavers, Confusion, and "Macabre Curiosity"

While the status of surgery rose dramatically during the course of the Eighteenth Century, other issues of dissection and the dead remained confused and unresolved. For example, the *air méphitique* which obsessed Mercier in 1782 was clearly not his only obsession. To Eighteenth-Century minds, the decay of cadavers spawned pestilence, potential epidemic disease, and mortality. Cadaver thefts, according to contemporaries, were on the increase, and the *amphitéâtres de dissection* replaced the Place de Grève as scenes of brawls where apprentice barber-surgeons armed with weapons challenged surgeons and medical faculty for the best places. Seats had to be ticketed so that outsiders who sought diversion or theatrics were admitted last. As John McManners noted in his *Death and the Enlightenment*, while anatomical studies were held in honor in the medical profession, there was also a level of "macabre curiosity" attached to them, which encouraged "fashionable society" to treat *amphithéâtres de dissection* almost as anatomy parlors.¹⁷ In the words of two of Molière's characters in *Le Malade imaginaire*, which had been published nearly a century earlier, a public anatomy

¹⁷ John McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment: Changing Attitudes to Death among Christians and Unbelievers in Eighteenth-century France* (Oxford, 1981), 41.

demonstration was a place to take one's friends or even one's mistress:

Thomas Diaforus: "With monsieur's permission and for your diversion, I would like to invite you one of these evenings to come to the dissection of a woman. I will be presenting the commentary."

Toinette: "I would love such entertainment. There are those who present their mistresses with comedy, but to present an anatomy demonstration is something much more gallant."¹⁸

Among the amphitheaters in Paris, the Jardin des Plantes or Jardin du Roi, for example, could count among its 4-500 spectators at least 150 foreigners who came to Paris because it was heralded as the center of anatomical advancement. Pierre Dionis, who served as the first surgeon to the royal children, described the press of those who wished to find seats in the amphitheater where he practiced: "the assemblage of students became so great that the largest hall which was designed for these demonstrations could hold only half of those who wished to attend.... We were able to overcome the confusion only by excluding the barbers and those who were attracted to the proceedings solely by curiosity." Medical practitioners attended

¹⁸ Molière, *Le Malade Imaginaire: A Three-act Comedy in Prose Interspersed with Songs and Dances* (New York, 1903), Acte II, Scène V: 89.

to learn their trade more completely, comedians and actors attended to memorize the sounds of good diction and to view exemplary bearing, even prostitutes were present for the "exceptional orations" of men like Joseph Duverny, who practiced in the Jardin du Roi from 1684 to 1730.¹⁹ Paris was not unlike its European neighbors in this mingling of medical education and the culture of diversion. According to Giovanna Ferrari's study of Italian amphitheatres, Bologna had a similar history. There, dissections were even scheduled to coincide with the carnival period.²⁰

When Des Esserts published his *Traité de Police* in 1786, he also noted the widespread popularity of anatomy dissections and expansion of studios, laboratories, and private lecture halls where such dissections could take place. But, to him, there were serious abuses attached to their popularity. Those abuses could descend directly to the core of

¹⁹ G. Cordier, *Paris et les Anatomists au Cours de l'histoire* (Paris: IAC, 1955), 39-40. The demonstrations at the Jardin du Roi during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries included an assemblage of famous practitioners: Dionis (1673-1680), Duverney (1680-1730, Winslow (1742-1758), Ferrein (1758-1775), and Portal (1775-1793). For a period description of the amphitheatre, see the entry under Jardin royal in Germain Brice, *Description Nouvelle de la Ville de Paris, et Recherche des Singularitez les Plus Remarquables qui se Trouvent à Present dans cette Grande Ville*, 5th ed., 2 vols. (Paris, 1706-1752), 2: 377-80.

²⁰ Giovanna Ferrari, "Public anatomy lessons and the carnival: the anatomy theatre of Bologna," *Past and Present*, 117 (1987), 50-106.

society, he asserted, if the police did not intercede to protect decency and morality and even to protect living subjects from the scalpel's incision. "It should be condemnable," he asserted, "to admit any spectators whose only interest is an indiscreet and libertine curiosity."²¹

Questions about the acquisition of bodies became commonplace in an environment where at least five hundred corpses were needed for instruction, and the prices of the cadavers could range from 40 to 100 *livres*

apiece.²² It was speculated that leading members of the surgical community engaged in nocturnal grave robbing, while members of polite society like Stéphanie

de Genlis boasted of acquaintances who traveled with cadavers in their coaches in order to provide diversions to their friends or visited private anatomy dissections where, in one case, the cadaver was

preserved in a glass cabinet in the garden.²³ Regardless of the abuses, men like d'Alembert counseled municipal authorities to "shut their eyes" to what was well-known.²⁴ Or, as correspondence so pointedly noted: "One must love the dead more than the living in order to refuse to supply bodies which could be so useful to human beings."²⁵

The issue of the supply of cadavers was clearly a critical one. Because of the Faculté's preservation of its rights to

monitor the distribution of bodies for dissection and the Hôtel Dieu's unwillingness to part with their patients' corpses (relatives were guaranteed first rights of reclamation and masses were

paid in advance), cadavers were scarce and expensive. When Tenon of the Collège de Chirurgie listed his five principle "obstacles" to the progress of anatomy,



²¹ Des Dessarts, *Dictionnaire Universelle de Police*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1786).

²² B.N. fonds Delamare, ms. 21737, fol. 141, "Mémoire touchant les anatomies qui se font tous les hivers à Paris."

²³ Stéphanie Ducrest de Genlis, quoted in Adolphe Guillot, *Paris qui Souffre: la Basse-Geôle du Grand Châtelet et les Morgues Modernes* (Paris, 1888), 125.

²⁴ s.v. "Cadavres," *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts, et des Métiers*, 35 vols., eds. Diderot and d'Alembert (Paris, 1751), 3: 509-10.

²⁵ B.N. fonds Joly de Fleury, ms. 269, fol. 79.

among them was the dearth of cadavers.²⁶ Police and judicial records are, in fact, replete with requests for cadavers, investigations of infractions of the laws, and examples of rulings gone awry.²⁷

In such an environment, there was even an Eighteenth-Century cadaver literature which traverses literary circles from Rousseau to Restif. While Rousseau had espoused the “recreation of the eyes” in his *Reveries of a Solitary*, he nonetheless found himself repelled by the collecting of cadavers and by those men who penetrated into the mysteries of nature through anatomy. When describing an anatomy lesson which he had viewed (albeit on an animal), he remarked: “what a frightful equipage in an anatomical amphitheater!—stinking corpses, dripping and livid flesh, blood, disgusting entrails, frightful skeletons, pestilent vapors.”²⁸ Parisian Edmond Barbier described in his *Journal* a crowd assembled around the Basse-Geôle where fifteen or sixteen infants had been deposited on a single day. Allegedly an anatomist had been collecting them for his work, but the suspicion of wrong-doing hung unpleasantly over the proceedings.²⁹ Restif likewise compiled a litany of stories of dismembered corpses

and grave-robbing medical students.³⁰ The literature, as a whole, made no claims on religious grounds against dissections in anatomy instruction or against the use of cadavers, nor did authors typically fault medical students and anatomists for their zealousness in obtaining bodies. What fears there were came from increased lawlessness brought about by the lack of cadavers, concerns over the deposit of human detritus after dissections had been conducted, and the potential for crimes of violence in such a lucrative market in bodies. According to the records at the Préfecture de Police from the Eighteenth Century, drainage ditches were filled with human bones, especially crania; and among the vast numbers of crimes and frauds which were committed, authorities pursued only those suspects who were “so inept” as to be caught in the act.³¹ It was rumored that commerce existed in human fat or lard to be used to lubricate movable parts of carriages and machinery, and that murderers used the laxity of policing to hide their crimes.³²

Despite of appearances, existing laws already dealt in some manner with the disposition of cadavers.³³ The string of

²⁶ Jacques René Tenon, *Observations sur les Obstacles qui s'oppose* (Paris, 1785), 18.

²⁷ B.N. fonds Joly de Fleury, ms. 269, fols. 103, 110, 129, 131, 138, and 140.

²⁸ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Reveries of a Solitary* (New York, 1927), 139, 146-147.

²⁹ Edmond Jean François Barbier, *Journal Anecdotique d'un Parisien sous Louis XV, 1727 à 1751* (Paris, 1963), 104-05.

³⁰ Restif de la Bretonne, *Nuits de Paris*, 25-27 and 86-92.

³¹ Archives de la Préfecture de Police (hereafter cited as A.P.P.), fonds Lamoignon, 11: 356.

³² Parent-Duchâtelet, “De l'influence et de l'assainissement des Salles de Dissection,” 256. See also A.P.P. D^B440.

³³ J. B. Denisart, ed., *Collection des Décisions Nouvelles et de Notions Relatives à la Jurisprudence Actuelle*. 4 vols., (Paris, 1771) I: 386ff. These

laws and ordinances, however, failed to address the most obvious repository of corpses, the common graves of Parisian cemeteries. From 1732 through 1780, the Cemetery of Clamard, for example, was among the most vulnerable to cadaver thefts. In some cases, evidence showed that surgical students were the culprits; in other cases, the thieves were unknown individuals who were not opposed to battering the cemetery guardian or to assaulting the patrols that frequented the area. For example, the winter of 1779-1780 was a particularly fertile one for thieves. On the night of 19 December, some twenty men scaled the walls of the cemetery, pelted the dogs with rocks and confiscated six bodies. Two weeks later, approximately thirty men, armed with swords, knives, and clubs stole eleven cadavers, only to return two nights later to take another dozen bodies. The law was unclear, but authorities finally determined to press charges on grounds that the suspects had “violated the respect due to cemeteries and that they had disturbed the peace.”³⁴ Registers of the Basse-Geôle were equally graphic in chronicling the results of dissections of clandestine bodies. In 1786, for example, amidst the notations of nearly 200 unnamed female and male bodies, there are mentions of “human

references cite the text of the *Déclaration* of 5 September 1712, the *Sentence rendue part M. le Lieutenant de Police* of 21 December 1735, and the *Sentence de Police* of 29 March 1743.

³⁴ Archives de l'Assistance Publique, Hôtel Dieu, liasse 1438, “Régistre des Deliberations du Bureau de l'Hôtel Dieu, 1732, 1779, 1780.

bones appearing to have been the result of a dissection.”³⁵ The pages also reference parts of bodies, multiple crania, and various trunks of corpses.³⁶ Gruesomely catalogued by the clerks of the morgue, the registers represent a list of the unknown, the unwanted, and those whose remains had been bartered.

Those corpses, which had been “resurrected” from the cemeteries, which lay unpreserved on an anatomist’s table, or which spent time in furtive transit were clearly dangerous to public health.³⁷ For centuries the dead had coexisted with the living, in their neighborhoods and in the churches themselves; but space and hygiene had begun to win out against tradition.³⁸ When the Revolution came, the relationships between the living to the dead, of odors and space, and of the medical profession were renegotiated.

³⁵ A.P.P., A^B225 Grand Châtelet (registers of the Basse-Goêle, 1786).

³⁶ A.P.P., A^B225 Grand Châtelet (registers of the Basse-Goêle, 1786).

³⁷ See Nicholas De Lamare, *Traité de la police*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1713), *L’Encyclopédie*, s.v. “cadavres,” “odorat,” and “miasmes,” and J. Roberts, “Le Laboratoire d’un Anatomiste et les Procédés de Conservation des Cadavres au début du XVIII^e Siècle,” *La France médicale* (1908): 1-2.

³⁸ Pierre Chaunu in his *La Mort à Paris* (Paris, 1978) noted that “the elite of the eighteenth century, led by the upper clergy, in their concern over hygiene did not hesitate to upset the essential notions of traditional society toward their dead.” The fear of miasmas, the acts of the commissaries, and the Parlement de Paris all led to a more secular approach to dealing with municipal problems that separated the living from their dead.

Issues of Redefinition and Social Control

When the members of the Legislative Assembly met in 1791 to reconstruct France, there were a number of directions which seemed clear to them. They were heavily influenced by the practical work of surgeons during the previous century, by the recommendations of the Société Royal de Médecine, by *philosophes* whose works extolled the virtues of a new pedagogy of medical training, and by the contents of the *cahiers de doléances* (lists of grievances to King Louis XVI).³⁹ For the next three years, as a new medical profession was being debated and formalized, private dissections increased and a market in bodies continued. Finally in December 1794, the first legislation was put in place, creating three *écoles de santé*. Over a series of three legislative sessions, everything from medical paraphernalia, to the types of clinical experiences, costs, and access to cadavers was spelled out.

In spite of the decrees, however, dissections proliferated throughout Paris, and officials received a stream of constant warnings about the on-going traffic in

³⁹ See Marie-José Imbault-Huart, "L'école Pratique de Dissection de Paris de 1750 à 1822," in *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, IVe section. Sciences Historiques et Philologiques*, (1970-71), 841-50; François Quesnay, *Recherches Critiques et Historiques sur l'origine, sur les Divers États et sur les Progress de la Recherché de la Chirurgie en France*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1744); M. Ploin, "Cahiers de doléances: les préoccupations du corps médical en mars 1789," *Gazette Médicale*, 98, no 14 (1989): 10-13.

bodies.⁴⁰ When officials investigated the amphitheatres which they had authorized, they discovered that men who were as well-known as physician Xavier Bichat were in abrogation of the law. While his private amphitheater on the rue des Carmes had the requisite water supply and available ventilation, neighbors challenged the cleanliness of the space and attacked his morality. Although he was a well-respected anatomist, "cadavers of men and women were exposed nude to the eyes of the young."⁴¹ Given the seriousness of the charges, his amphitheater was reviewed twice, and eventually it was closed. According to police reports, while he monitored his clientele more closely and he had replaced his sheer curtains with canvas to discourage spectators and to cease offending innocent passers-by, he had nonetheless not filed the required forms for cadaver authorization.⁴² While the police monitored at least fifteen amphitheatres and laboratories, at least nine of which were private, they had reason to watch Bichat more closely. According to sources, his *Anatomie descriptive* had required the dissection of

⁴⁰ A.N. F877 (III). See also J. G. Cabanis, Rapport fait au Nom de la Commission d'Instruction Publique, et Projet de Resolution sur un Mode Provisoire de Police Médicale (Paris, messidor an VI), 12-15.

⁴¹ "Les laboratoires de dissection de Bichat," *Le Progress Medical Illustré*, no. 6, 45.

⁴² "Police des Salles de Dissection et Laboratoires d'anatomie," 3 vendémiaire an VII, *Bulletin des Lois*, 2, B.231, no. 2050.

over six hundred cadavers, and in 1797, he had been arrested for cadaver theft.⁴³

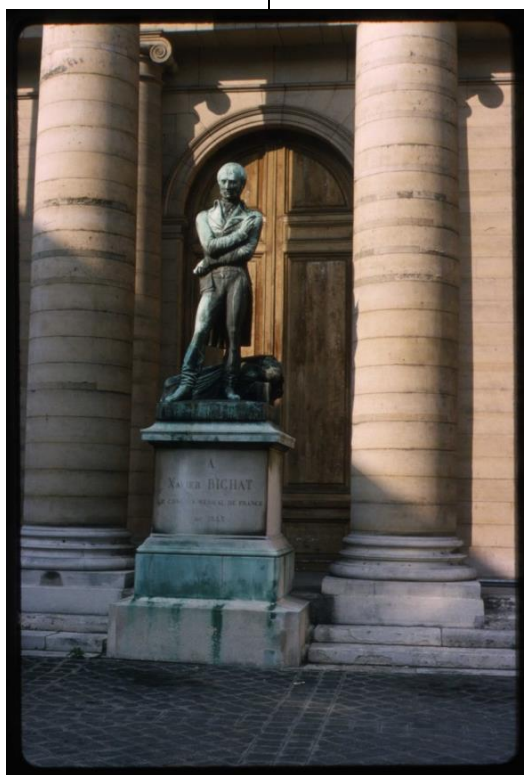
Reports of police informants were equally telling. On the rue Julien-le-Pauvre, the debris of cadavers produced a stench that left residents fearing for their health, and near the Hospice d'Humanité, reports described the miasma which altered the air and threatened additional lives. Cadaver thefts from the former St. Catherine's Cemetery continued, and police officials were forced to lock the doors to the *amphithéâtre de dissection* of a citizen Javelot whose laboratory was a "hideous spectacle" which attracted curious on-lookers but endangered their health.⁴⁴ Even the École de Médecine was not immune to scandal; a young student, according to reports, had paraded around two blood-soaked heads.⁴⁵ Elsewhere reports of the Bureau Central of Paris inventoried

official requests for corpses, e.g. 20 requested for one week in January 1798 and 26 cadavers for another week in February of that year.⁴⁶ Demand appeared to be at an all-time high.

For purposes of public health and public order, the police of Paris in October 1801 began to set formal guidelines. By 1806 during the Empire, they had been

formalized: courses in anatomy and dissection could not begin before 22 October, and they were required to end no later than 20 April of each year. Legally obtained cadavers could be transported to and from the dissections only at prescribed times late in the evening so as not to attract crowds or to offend sensibilities. Furthermore, no new private amphitheatres could be opened without express approval of the prefecture.⁴⁷ Additional

laws and ordinances during the early Napoleonic years included regularizing the practice of medicine in all of its forms, the creation of four new cemeteries outside of the boundaries of the city of Paris, of a



⁴³ Dr. Trénel, "Bichat, voleur de cadavres," *Bulletin de la Société Française d'histoire de Médecine*, 26, no. 3-4 (1932): 99. See also A.N. F⁷3840.

⁴⁴ A.N. BB³87, *Rapport du Bureau Central*, 23 November 1799, 20-29 April 1798, 12-21 October 1798, 1-10 November 1798.

⁴⁵ A.N. AF^{IV}3842, 18 April 1799.

⁴⁶ A.N. BB³89, *Rapport du Bureau Central*, 20-30 January 1799, 9-18 February 1799.

⁴⁷ A.P.P. DB⁴40, "Police médicale," 24 September 1801.

minimum height for the walls of remaining cemeteries, and of a payment schedule for recovering live individuals and corpses from the Seine. (It had formerly been more lucrative to fish out a cadaver than to rescue a person from drowning in the Seine.)⁴⁸

Napoleonic legislators and police officials dealt with a myriad of issues of social control from cross-dressing to offensive theatrical offerings, and the *amphithéâtres de dissection*.⁴⁹ Working in concert, the commune of Paris and the government of Napoleonic France (including the personal interest of Napoleon himself) moved toward a more tightly defined medical corps, with uniform teaching, licensing, and practice. In October 1813, in fact, the most significant legislation was written and promulgated. The *Ordonnance concernant les amphithéâtres d'anatomie et de chirurgie*, which Préfet Etienne Pasquier framed, was a blanket decree, suppressing anatomy teaching except for the instruction supplied by the Faculté de Médecine and the hospital known as La Pitié. Cadavers were to be supplied daily from the unclaimed bodies of the hospitals and clinics; and to provide ample material for dissection, four-fifths of the bodies would be entrusted to the medical school and one-fifth would be provided to La Pitié's clinical students. The thirteen articles

carefully and thoroughly spelled out where dissections could be conducted, by whom, and how transportation and burial of cadavers was to be arranged. Explicitly stated, cadavers could not be obtained from cemeteries.⁵⁰ The ordinance was a pragmatic answer to decades of experimentation.

Public and private dissections had been part of the face of Paris for centuries—serving as training for the surgical arts, as education for a non-medical but learned society, as theatrics, as a ceremony and a sort of carnivalesque diversion, and as a market for the cadavers of Paris. In the end, however, no longer would Enlightenment writers encourage body-snatching in the name of science. Nor would the demand for cadavers create a marketplace in which relatives of the dead would be forced to follow a simply shrouded body or a makeshift coffin to insure that the remains of a relative would be appropriately interred.⁵¹ In fact, in a world of controlled spaces and commodities under Napoleon, neither would the likes of Molière's Toinette look agreeably forward to an evening's entertainment at a Parisian *amphithéâtre de dissection*, nor would surgical students and grave robbers conduct their nocturnal forays. "In the light of dissection," as

⁴⁸ A.P.P. DB210, "La morgue"; Archives Parlementaires, 4: 28, Projet du loi.

⁴⁹ A.N. F896 (11^{Aa}, 11^{Ag}, 11^b).

⁵⁰ A.N. F877 (III³), "Ordonnance Concernant les Amphithéâtres d'anatomie et de Chirurgie, 15 Octobre 1813."

⁵¹ J. J. Delamalle, *Enterrement de ma Mère ou Reflexions sur les Cerémonies des Funérailles* (Paris, an IV), as cited in Trénel, "Bichat, voleur," 103.

Foucault correctly argued, *but* also under the constraints of the Ordinance of 1813 and the police, the marketplace in bodies

became a footnote (or, at most, at chapter title) in the history of eighteenth-century and Napoleonic Paris.

THE 1799 ANGLO-RUSSIAN INVASION OF HOLLAND: A COMPARATIVE VIEW FROM THE PRESS

by David Robinson

The year 1799 in European history is often closely associated with the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte who became first consul of France after the coup of 18 Brumaire. 1799 marks the year that he began to lead France on a path that would make it the master of continental Europe until the defeats of 1813. However, this future was not readily apparent to Europeans in 1799. France was racked by internal strife between royalists and republican Jacobins, Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt was isolated after the French fleet was destroyed in Aboukir Bay, and the French armies in Switzerland and Italy were suffering a series of defeats at the hands of the Russians and Austrians. It appeared as if revolutionary France would soon be defeated. Meanwhile, Britain was keen to play its role in France's defeat and strengthen its hand at the peace table. The result of this goal was a combined Anglo-Russian invasion of France's ally, the Batavian Republic which would open a new front and allow a passage into northern France.¹

¹ A.B. Piechowiak, "The Anglo-Russian Expedition to Holland in 1799," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 41 (December 1962), 183; and Piers Mackesy, *Statesmen at War: The Strategy of Overthrow 1798-1799* (London, 1974), ix.

Perhaps because this expedition ultimately failed, or maybe because it was overshadowed by other events like the 18 Brumaire coup, it has received relatively little attention by historians. Geert van Uythoven has thought as much and has made an effort to publicise the invasion in his book, *Voorwaarts, Bataven! De Engels-Russische invasie van 1799*. The objective of the book is to remedy the popular "unfamiliarity" outside the Netherlands with the invasion, but he was unable to publish the book in English because he was told it lacked reader interest.²

Nonetheless, there has been some scholarly attention to the invasion in the English-speaking world. A.B. Piechowiak has summarised the campaign and its political context in a 1962 article, situating it as part of a more general failure of a divided coalition which was more concerned with particular national interests than the overall goals of a coalition.³ Piers Mackesy provided a more extensive study in 1974 with his book *Statesmen at War: The Strategy of Overthrow 1798-1799*. He examines the invasion as part of a wider strategy developed by the British cabinet to overthrow France in 1799 which took

² Geert van Uythoven, *Voorwaarts, Bataven! De Engels-Russische invasie van 1799* (Zaltbommel, 1999), 7-8.

³ Piechowiak, 182-95.

the Second Coalition into “the realms of unlimited warfare.” This grand strategy was a failure for political reasons, particularly because of competition between the various coalition partners. Because of this competition with Austria, Lord Grenville, the architect of the Anglo-Russian invasion, rushed preparations resulting in a half-trained, poorly supplied expedition with an unclear campaign plan.⁴

These works all focus exclusively on the political and military history of the campaign and while they present a great amount of detail, they lack a wider analysis of the experience and effects of this event. Furthermore, within the English literature at least there is a strong focus on examining it within the context of British war aims. The purpose of this paper is to examine the 1799 invasion through the lens of the press in three national contexts: England, France, and the Batavian Republic (the Netherlands). An examination of the press allows for an understanding of how editors and government authorities (who often had some say in what was published) wanted the public to read the event. Through this examination, the differing political priorities that governments’ wanted to impart to their people will be revealed. *The Times*, a London based newspaper, demonstrates Britain’s preoccupation with portraying itself as a defender of

traditional liberty against French tyranny. In France *Le Moniteur Universel* sought to demonstrate the republic’s strength and the virtue of its cause in a time of weakness. The Leiden-based *Leydse Courant* meanwhile sought to justify a new government to a people discouraged with revolutionary politics. These political contexts would have a major impact on how the Anglo-Russian invasion was interpreted and portrayed.

The history of the press around the time of the French Revolution has received varied treatment by scholars. Hannah Barker has noted that even contemporaries attributed much power to the eighteenth-century press so that the study of the press in England has received much attention. Scholars have generally highlighted its role in the rise of consumerism and as a means of popular protest against the government. Barker looks at how newspapers both “represented and helped shape ‘public opinion’” through examining its role in the Association movement between 1779 and 1785. She challenges the notion that newspapers were simply propaganda for or against the government. Instead, English newspapers were dominated by “commercial concerns” so that the public had a role to play in determining its contents. This allowed for a variety of opinions to be expressed, so long as they appealed to a particular readership. The result was that foreign visitors to eighteenth-century England were

⁴ Mackesy, 312-18.

impressed by the freedom of its press.⁵ On the other hand, Jeremy Popkin studying the revolutionary French press has noted that despite over a thousand different newspapers, few historians have made use of these sources either because their numbers and unorganised content are just too overwhelming, or because they do not see them as a particularly valuable source. Popkin goes on to argue that the medium of newspapers was of “central importance” to the formation of a new revolutionary political culture. The elected assembly was at the centre of this new political culture and it was daily newspapers which focused on debates within the assembly that formed an “indispensable link between government and public.” Newspapers allowed the government to communicate its debates to the public and the public was able to respond in turn.⁶ Both Popkin and Barker agree that newspapers were essential for the formation and communication of public opinion and had a major impact on the political culture of the country in which they were produced. The Anglo-Russian invasion of Holland in 1799 will provide one instance of how newspapers sought to influence public opinion across several national contexts.

However, before proceeding to an examination of the press coverage of the invasion of Holland, it is necessary to

⁵ Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics, and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1998), 2-5 and 179-80.

⁶ Jeremy Popkin, *Revolutionary News: The Press in France 1789-1799* (Durham & London, 1990), 2-14.

detail some of the major highlights of this largely unfamiliar campaign. The general context of British plans to take part in the overthrow of a France weakened by several major defeats has already been mentioned. The Batavian Republic was specifically chosen as a target not just for these strategic reasons, but also because of intelligence which suggested popular unrest in that country. The British took this unrest to mean that the population was sympathetic to the restoration of the traditional government under William V of Orange as Stadtholder.⁷ The expedition force began to embark on August 8th, before the Russians arrived in England since there would not be enough transport ships for the Russians as well. However, the target of the landing was not defined so the ships first proceeded to Zeeland with the hope of linking up with Prussians with whom the British were negotiating for an entry into the war. When these negotiations fell through, and the weather prevented a landing, General Abercromby, commanding the first part of the invasion force, ordered an invasion of North Holland instead with the hope of engaging and destroying the Dutch fleet. Still, poor weather prevented a landing until 27 August.⁸

Initially, the British invasion force had some success. The Batavian army did not contest their initial landing, but did put up fierce resistance when the British

⁷ Piechowiak, 184; and van Uythoven, 14.

⁸ Piechowiak, 186-87; and van Uythoven, 63-64.

tried to move beyond the beaches. Nevertheless, the British captured the two batteries at the Helder which allowed for the safe landing of more troops and the passage of the fleet into the Zuider Zee where they could engage the Batavian fleet.⁹ This led to an astounding British success on 30 August when they sailed into the Zuider Zee and demanded the surrender of the Batavian fleet. The commander, Admiral Story, refused and declared his allegiance to the Batavian government and willingness to fight. However, the crews of the ships were not so willing and mutinied, capturing their officers, throwing their munitions overboard, and hoisting the Orange pennant. Thus the British captured the entire Dutch fleet of 11 warships without firing a shot.¹⁰

The invasion appeared to be going disastrously for the Batavian Republic. The situation did not improve after the

⁹ Piechowiak, 187.

¹⁰ Edward Walsh, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Holland: in the Autumn of the Year 1799; Illustrated with a Map of North Holland, and Seven Views of the Principal Places Occupied by the British Forces* (London, 1800), 35-37.

combined Franco-Batavian army were forced to retreat on the 10 September after a failed offensive in which the Batavian soldiers fled the battlefield.¹¹ It would appear that the Dutch were not enthusiastic about their regime. However,



the general uprising of the Dutch people against the Batavian government did not occur. The Stadholderate government was not popular, and William V's "command" for the Dutch people to rally to him only reminded them of his refusal to implement reforms when he was in power. His efforts to ferment rebellion in the province of Overijssel ended in

failure as small bands of Orangists were easily put down by volunteer National Guards.¹² Many National Guards also volunteered for duty on the frontlines and the tide turned on 19 September: the Anglo-Russian offensive was halted when the plundering Russian force was surrounded and attacked by the French and Batavians capturing thousands. According to Piechowiak, this "battle

¹¹ Simon Schama, *Patriots and Liberators: Revolution in the Netherlands 1780-1813* (London, 1977), 395.

¹² Schama, 394; and Walsh, 38.

decided the fate of whole expedition.”¹³ Although further action would take place, the initiative had passed to the Franco-Batavian army and on 18 October, with winter weather beginning to set in, the overall commander of the Anglo-Russian army, the Duke of York, agreed to a capitulation.¹⁴ This campaign then was replete with victories and defeats for both sides and as a result is an excellent case to see how each country’s press variously portrayed events. To highlight the unique priorities and concerns of each country, each one will be treated separately and then followed by a comparative conclusion.

The Times: Britain as a Defender of Traditional Freedom and Morality

Alan Forrest has asserted that eighteenth-century British culture was full of images and clichés of France as backward and its people unenterprising and poor. This was contrasted with Britain which was prosperous, capitalist, and just. Then France erupted in revolution. At first the Revolution was treated with indifference, or even with some degree of approval as it was viewed as an effort of the French people to implement the ideals of liberty and equality which Britain espoused. However, as noble and clerical émigrés fled to England, and the violence in France increased, the old stereotype was

revived and just and prosperous Britain became the archenemy of the disorder, tyranny, and violence of revolutionary France.¹⁵ This stereotype informed the decisions of government. Although the British government was “reactive,” in its planning, its general war aim throughout the period remained the restitution of France’s 1789 borders and the overthrow its revolutionary government.¹⁶ It was this overall strategy which coloured the coverage of the invasion of Holland by *The Times*.

In the days leading up to the invasion *The Times* gives the impression that this objective is soon to be achieved. After relating accounts of debates in the French legislative assembly received from Paris about actions to be taken at suppressing royalist insurrection, the editor notes that combined with Austrian and Russian victories in Italy, and “the armaments from this country,” it would seem that “a few months of perseverance in the efforts which [we] are now making, will of themselves conduct confederated Europe to the moral and political status quo of the year 1789.”¹⁷ The next day the paper reads that the time has come for a final blow and as such “the eyes of the

¹³ Piechowiak, 188-91; Schama, 396; Walsh, 56; and van Uythoven, 95-110.

¹⁴ Walsh, 89-91.

¹⁵ Alan Forrest, “L’Angleterre face à la France Napoléonienne,” in *Napoléon, le monde et les Anglais : guerre des mots et des images*, eds. Jean-Paul Bertaud, Alan Forrest, and Annie Jourdan (Paris, 2004), 119-20 and 141-42.

¹⁶ Mackesy, 2-12; and Jennifer Mori, *Britain in the Age of the French Revolution* (Harlow, England, 2000), 170-71.

¹⁷ *The Times* (London), 22 August 1799.

political world continue to be fixed upon the British Expedition and the Designs of the Cabinet of Berlin.” The British invasion of Holland and Prussian intervention can be tipping point which causes France to sue for “an immediate Peace!”¹⁸ Britain then, has a crucial role to play in ending the violence and disorder caused by French republicanism and restoring Europe to the peaceful state prior to 1789.

This optimistic spirit of victory over revolutionary France went hand-in-hand with consistent portrayals of it as brutal, tyrannical, and uncivilised. The same issue that notes the impending triumph of the old order also highlights the chaos in republican France as the “sanguinary spirit of democratic fury” of the Jacobins on the one hand and the “gallant efforts of the supporters of Monarchy” on the other lead to insurrections across the country.¹⁹ In September, when reports arrive that the Directory has suppressed the Jacobin rebels and now has turned to enacting greater restriction over the press, the editor remarks that the French are learning “in a bloody school” that no matter what republicans are behind their government, “they are incapable of Liberty...Without morals, without religion, without fundamental laws.”²⁰ The violence of the enemy has been clearly

defined and the necessity of overthrowing this regime established.

The brutality and backwardness is not just confined to France. *The Times* also seeks to demonstrate that the French republicans impart their values and their tyranny to their Batavian satellite as well. Even with news of serious unrest in France and allied victories on all fronts, *The Times* also found a place in its 24 August paper to include news of two deputies who came to blows in the Batavian First Chamber. Apparently, the Dutch have not “advanced in the principles or practice of politeness in consequence of their fraternity with France.”²¹ The message being presented is that republican principles lead to impropriety and violence even at the highest levels of society.

Furthermore, not only do the French spread immorality and disorder, they also oppress their allies. *The Times* reports that after their failed offensive against the British on the 10 September, the French retreated and broke the dykes around Alkmaar, Haarlem, and Amsterdam flooding the countryside. The journalist writes that nothing “but the consciousness of their inferiority in the field” and lack of co-operation from the Dutch “could have induced the French to have recourse to this cruel and fatal measure.” However, while this may slow down the invasion force it will only incite the population to greater hatred of them.

¹⁸ *The Times* (London), 23 August 1799.

¹⁹ *The Times* (London), 23 August 1799.

²⁰ *The Times* (London), 13 September 1799.

²¹ *The Times* (London), 24 August 1799.

The action demonstrates the “tenderness they shew for the prosperity and happiness of a People for whose liberty and welfare they pretend to combat.”²² The French are thus presented as hypocritical and defending their allies only out of self-interest.

The British did not necessarily view the Dutch people in such an unfavourable light. Edward Walsh, a member of the British expedition to Holland, notes that going back to the ancient Batavians (from where the Republic derived its name) the Dutch have been “remarkable for their courage and their love of freedom” and although they abandoned their old form of government in favour of a revolutionary one, the Netherlands did not suffer the same disorders and violence of France because of the “less impassioned character” of the Dutch. However, their nation has suffered greatly through siding with France as their navy and commerce is destroyed by “former allies” and their country plundered by “new friends” so that it has

become impoverished.²³ It follows then that the Dutch people will be more than willing to rise up and throw off French tyranny.

This is a theme which *The Times* repeatedly highlights throughout the Holland expedition. Within days after the

first part of the invasion force embarking it is reported that the “greatest part” of the Dutch population “seems ready to declare for the Stadtholder, and invokes the arrival of the British Armament.”²⁴

Another report notes that the arrival of the Prince of Orange in nearby Lingen has caused a stir in the “United Provinces,” and “great

disturbances have actually taken place.”²⁵ Other reports highlight the difficulties the Batavian government is having in mobilising soldiers and finding recruits. Letters demonstrate a fear of the return of the Stadtholder.²⁶



²² *The Times* (London), 21 September 1799.

²³ Walsh, 1-18.

²⁴ *The Times* (London), 15 August 1799.

²⁵ *The Times* (London), 26 August 1799.

²⁶ *The Times* (London), 21 August 1799.

Once the invasion actually landed on the 27 August, a great deal of attention was given to the possibility of Dutch revolt against French rule. A report from 2 September describes the success the British troops have had in capturing the Helder batteries and establishing a beachhead. This beachhead provides a base not only for British forces but for “whatever part of the Dutch troops and people may range themselves upon the side of their ancient Constitution and the Stadtholder.” The distance to the Dutch capital is only 42 English miles and the editors have “little doubt” that the British troops will be able to cross this distance in little time since a “concurrent invasion” is likely to occur in the eastern provinces after disturbances reported there.²⁷ This optimism was further encouraged by news the next day of the surrender of the Batavian fleet “without firing a gun.” Alongside this news is a report that British troops wearing orange cockades in their hats are pressing inland and are being “joined by many of the inhabitants.”²⁸

However, news of a general insurrection was not forthcoming and a tone of consternation begins to pervade the reports on Holland. On 6 September the editor states that it still remains to be seen if the Dutch people “encouraged by our victories, and faithful to their ancient Constitution, will rise to shake off the opprobrious yoke of France.” Only time

will tell, but it is also made clear that if “the Jacobin infatuation should prevail,” the recent victories are of “the very highest importance” since they have allowed for the surrender of the Dutch fleet and provide a “powerful diversion” in favour of Britain’s allies.²⁹ Already early in the campaign there was worry that the anticipated general insurrection would not happen. Even the reporting of the event which seemed to provide the strongest evidence of weak attachment to the new republic, the surrender of the Batavian fleet, was tempered with a rebuttal of the notion that the army is equally “well disposed” towards the invaders. Indeed, the paper reports that “no troops ever behaved more gallantly than the Dutch did” in their defence of the Helder. What is more, the Dutch naval officers who were captured refused to “acknowledge obedience to the Stadtholder.”³⁰

To suggest that the Dutch people were not particularly enthusiastic about returning to the Old Regime style of government would, of course, be unwelcome when public opinion was steeped in Francophobia and committed to the removal of the danger of republican France. *The Times* thus made a strong effort to explain within this framework why the Dutch did not rise in general revolt against the republican regime. Regarding the Batavian officers who refused to acknowledge their old sovereign,

²⁷ *The Times* (London), 2 September 1799.

²⁸ *The Times* (London), 3 September 1799.

²⁹ *The Times* (London), 6 September 1799.

³⁰ *The Times* (London), 4 September 1799.

The Times asserts that while some may be attached to “the Jacobin principle and French fraternity,” what is in fact “most likely” is that they refused out of self-interest. As simple prisoners of war, they may someday be able to return to the Batavian Republic on parole. However, if they returned to Holland still under French influence after surrendering to the Prince of Orange, they might be sent to the guillotine as traitors.³¹ Thus, it was not through attachment to French principles that they rejected Orange, but because they feared French tyranny. Indeed, a report on the favourable reception of British invaders in Enkhuizen states that “wherever the inhabitants have an opportunity of declaring their sentiments, without being exposed to French tyranny, they appear favourable to the House of Orange.”³² Thus, the refusal of the Dutch people to rise in revolt is interpreted as confirmation of French tyranny.

In another article, a journalist stresses the complicated political atmosphere as a reason for lack of a general insurrection. This author reacts against “confident assurances of immediate surrenders and insurrections” by trying to shed some light on the “state of parties and public opinion” in Holland. He argues that it is an oversimplification to divide the Dutch into two camps, pro-Jacobin and pro-Orange. Instead there is much “subdivision of parties” and there

are many moderates who although not necessarily supporters of the republican regime, do want to see some reforms. It is this party which has “began to revive” hoping for an improvement to the old constitution as a reward for their support but they will not commit “without a near prospect of success, nor without certain conditions or promises.”³³ What is needed then to promote a general insurrection is a combination of military victories with the promise of reform.

Neither came. The invasion force was soundly defeated at Bergen on September 19th and while the Prince of Orange’s declaration did offer amnesty for any past service to the Batavian regime, he did not mention any plans for reform, nor did his command to rally to him reassure the Dutch people.³⁴ As a result, the hoped for rebellion in the east did not come, and the initiative was lost to the French and Batavian forces. There appears to be a certain degree of frustration with this outcome as evidenced in *The Times*’ commentary on the Duke of York’s reasoning for the capitulation. A letter from the Duke of York explains that with cold weather setting in he was left with two options: break the dykes and flood the province to protect his retreat, or negotiate a capitulation to allow for the re-embarkation of his army. The former was “repugnant to the feelings, as well as

³¹ *The Times* (London), 4 September 1799.

³² *The Times* (London), 1 October 1799.

³³ *The Times* (London), 24 September 1799.

³⁴ *The Times* (London), 18 September 1799; and Schama, 394.

contrary to the character of the British nation.” This would appear to be the perfect opportunity for an editor to comment on the superiority of British morality over that of the French, who had already broken the dykes earlier in the campaign. Instead, the normally conservative and supportive *Times* criticises York for letting this “repugnance” have too great an effect upon his feelings, especially since the province of Holland has proven to be “the most hostile to the lawful Constitution and to the objects of the Expedition” of all the United Provinces. Instead of letting the ungrateful Hollanders pay for the failure of the campaign, 8,000 prisoners are to be released under the terms of the capitulation which will be used to “man the relics of the enemy’s marine” and therefore result in “fresh labours and dangers” being imposed on Britain’s already strained sailors.³⁵ The failure of this invasion which was based upon the assumption that it would be supported by Orangist rebellions presented an unwelcome challenge to the image of France as a ruthless and hated oppressor. The result was a very frustrated interpretation of its failure focusing on the hostility of one province.

Le Moniteur Universel: The Strength of French and Republican Arms

As *The Times* noted early in August, republican France in 1799 was in

³⁵ *The Times* (London), 28 October 1799.

dire straits. First of all, the Directory’s military strategy for defending the republic and its satellite states had proven disastrous. It advocated offensives on all fronts as the best means of defence against the coalition, but such a plan spread France’s military resources thin and the result was a series of defeats. Even when they realised their mistake and adopted a plan for more concentrated offensives in Italy and Switzerland, poor performance by field commanders resulted in more defeats.³⁶ Meanwhile, the moderate directory government had to deal with enemies on both sides of the political spectrum with the Jacobins on one hand, and the Royalists on the other. Indeed, royalist uprisings were causing such a disturbance that the British also considered an invasion of France instead of Holland in support of this faction.³⁷ The press was an important battlefield for this internal political upheaval. As historian François Furet has argued, the French Revolution was a “competition of discourses for the appropriation of legitimacy” to which Popkin adds that is was the press “where that competition was carried on.” As a result, between 1798 and 1799, the Directory administrations sought to impose greater press restrictions

³⁶ Steven T. Ross, “The Military Strategy of the Directory: The Campaigns of 1799,” *French Historical Studies* 5 (Autumn 1967), 174-80.

³⁷ Mackesy, 72-75.

as part of an effort to combat this dissention.³⁸

Le Moniteur Universel had steered away from the partisanship which characterised some of the other newspapers in republican France, and consequently became France's newspaper of record throughout the 1790s.³⁹ However, as a result of the increasingly restrictive press freedom, the press in both France and the Batavian Republic did not exhibit the same number of editorial comments as the English press. Nevertheless, editors still had an important influence on the message that their newspaper presented. They focused largely on the debates within the Legislative Assembly but they also decided which speeches would be copied in full and which would receive only brief mention thus creating "a dialogue between the paper and politicians."⁴⁰

Because of this ongoing debate over the control of the press, and the internal dangers posed by the Jacobins and Royalists, *Le Moniteur* paid little attention early on to events in the Batavian Republic. Instead the focus was on debates in the Assembly about other matters, chiefly the dangers posed by too much press freedom. For instance, the paper for 5 September includes a brief note on the "ardour of the Batavians in defending

their liberty" but it is more concerned by a message from the Directory to the Council of 500 (the Legislative Assembly) explaining the efforts at restricting press freedom. In it, Director Sieyès explains that it in order to "assure communal salvation" and military victory, the nation needs a "prompt union of force and will" and that royalist publications frustrate this goal by sowing "division between citizens."⁴¹ However, this debate did involve the Batavian Republic as some articles critical of the Batavian government's loyalty and effectiveness were published in certain newspapers which prompted an outcry from the Batavian government prompting its ambassador to France, Jan Rutger Schimmelpenninck to pen a defence of the Batavian government to the French Directory. The Directory responded by explaining that it has already denounced the "lightness" which allowed journalists to express such "perfidious suspicions" and has only encouraged the directors to continue in their efforts to put forward a "precise law" against these sorts of abuses.⁴² *Le Moniteur* proceeds to make an effort in future papers to include declarations of the Directory's commitment to supporting the Batavian

³⁸ Popkin, 96 and 173-77.

³⁹ Popkin, 32-33.

⁴⁰ Popkin, 106-07.

⁴¹ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), September 5, 1799. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

⁴² *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 8 September 1799.

Republic against its enemies to show the strength of the Franco-Batavian alliance.⁴³

However, as the situation escalated, events in the Batavian Republic received more coverage.

This coverage was affected by the need to demonstrate the strength of republican, and particularly French, arms. To achieve this goal, especially in the early days of the invasion when the situation looked highly favourable to the British invasion force, the reports sometimes presented misleading information. Regarding the English debarkation in Holland on August

27th, the paper briefly notes that the landing was zealously contested by the Batavians so that the English lost 5,600 men. In reality, it was less than 500 killed and wounded compared to over 1,000 for the Batavians.⁴⁴ Even more detailed accounts were able to “spin” the story to appear more positive to the Franco-Batavian army. News arrived in Paris on the 15 September which showed that French commander, General , had made “a

retrograde movement” in the face of the numerically superior English army, but once reinforcements arrived he was able to press his attack again “in spite of the most obstinate resistance” on the part of the

English. This attack managed to block the English from further offensives and it is hoped that a second attack will have “still happier effects.”⁴⁵ Even clear disasters like the peaceful surrender of the Batavian fleet were turned into a positive expression of the strength of republican armies. A declaration by Director Sieyès is the source of information on the surrender of the Batavian fleet, and he

states that the news of this event has only inspired the Batavian soldiers to fight more for their “homes, for their independence” and demonstrate a desire to “wash away in the enemy’s blood the shame that their sailors covered them in.”⁴⁶

Alongside the reports of the strength of the Franco-Batavian alliance and their bravery in the field is a



⁴³ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 10 September 1799.

⁴⁴ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 3 September 1799; van Uythoven, 75; and Walsh, 34.

⁴⁵ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 16 September 1799.

⁴⁶ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 12 September 1799.

contrasting image of the deceitful, cowardly English, and their poor treatment of their Russian allies. In his announcement of the surrender of the Batavian fleet, Sieyès draws upon an ancient stereotype of the perfidious character of the English.⁴⁷ He notes that “it is again upon treason that England bases its success.” He compares the surrender to the entry of the British fleet into Toulon 1793 at the request of royalist rebels where again the English only triumphed “through the most cowardly of perfidies.” However, a success “so shamefully obtained can be quickly expiated” and England has made no progress on land with the combined Franco-Batavian army before them: “where there will be no cowards or traitors, she cannot hope for success.”⁴⁸ Indeed, a journalist wonders why later in the month with reinforcements strengthening the Franco-Batavian army every day the English have not made any attempt to break the enemy line. He concludes that the English are “counting on a counter-revolution in the interior: that is the only way to explain their inaction after the landing.”⁴⁹ The English are thus portrayed as cowardly, only able to achieve victory against brave French soldiers through deceit and treachery.

⁴⁷ H.D. Schmidt, “The Idea and Slogan of ‘Perfidious Albion,’” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 14 (October 1953), 604-16.

⁴⁸ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 12 September 1799.

⁴⁹ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 17 September 1799.

The British attempt on the 19 September to advance south through Holland after the arrival of Russian reinforcements proved to be the success for which the French and Batavian press was waiting. The way the offensive played out fed the stereotypes of the English already established. In the course of the battle, General Brune ordered his troops to “retreat successively in order to bring the enemy outside their entrenchments,” which allowed the French canons to decimate their ranks while eventually the Batavian brigade closed in on their flank with bayonets, forcing them into an all-out retreat, abandoning their cannons and ambulances. This allowed for the capture of over 2,000 Russians soldiers, including their overall commander, General Hermann and many of his officers who were not pleased with their British allies. The journalist reports that within 36 hours of their disembarkment, the English “according to their praiseworthy custom” placed the Russians in the avant-garde so that they suffered the brunt of the fighting. Furthermore, the captured general complained vigorously against the English who apparently did not support his advance.⁵⁰ Other Russian officers confirmed the stereotypes of the French as they refused to be confined to the same room with captured English officers, fighting them and calling them “cowards

⁵⁰ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 25 September 1799.

and traitors.”⁵¹ This contrasts sharply with the relations between the French and Batavians who fought so bravely together.

Reports of “horrors” committed by the English and the Russians during their short offensive as they killed women and the elderly and began pillaging are also presented by *Le Moniteur*. This is contrasted with the compliments of captured officers who all praised the “bravery and generosity” of the French soldiers. The contrast is further illustrated in an anecdote that the journalist provides. After the battle the French soldiers, who had not eaten since the morning, began collecting the wounded English soldiers from the battlefield. Someone questioned them, asking why they continued to collect the enemy’s wounded when they could now sit down and have some soup instead. A French grenadier replied with a response “dignified of a Frenchman:” “Is one hungry when there are still noble deeds to be done?... And are we not doing two at once, in preserving the life of a wounded Englishman? We fulfill our duties to humanity and we take from the prisons of England one of our unfortunate comrades.”⁵² Thus the greed and selfishness of the English and Russians—whose ranks are often filled with convicts—is contrasted with the generosity,

⁵¹ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 26 September 1799.

⁵² *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 26 September 1799.

morality, and humour of the republican French soldier.

However, after the Battle of Bergen there is much less focus on news from Holland. Shortly after an even greater victory was achieved by General Masséna at Zurich, which changed France’s fortunes in that crucial region. Furthermore, in mid-October Napoleon Bonaparte returned from Egypt with news of his battles there which dominated *Le Moniteur*’s news for the rest of that month. The Anglo-Russian invasion had served its purpose for *Le Moniteur* and the French directory’s propaganda. It provided news of some success at a time when it was desperately needed to restore the morale of the public. The capitulation of the Duke of York received only a brief comment in the paper. It listed the terms of agreement and declares “such are, for England, the results of this grand expedition which was ordered in such little time to invade the Batavian Republic and also threaten the territory of the French Republic.”⁵³

Leydse Courant: Uniting in defence of Batavian “Liberty and Independence.”

The situation of the Batavian Republic was quite similar to that of France and as a result there are also many similarities in the press coverage of the invasion. In the 1780s, a large segment of the Dutch population rose in revolt against the Stadtholderate government

⁵³ *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 26 October 1799.

demanding various reforms. It was put down with help from the Prussians, but when France invaded and established the Batavian Republic in 1795 it was greeted with some degree of happiness by the population. However, successive coups and conflicts between Unitarists wanting a more centralised structure to the state and moderates who wanted tempered democracy with provincial autonomy led to disappointment with the new republican regimes. The new Directory government established in 1798 considered themselves to be the true republican party as they sought wide popular support and tried to balance this with implementing reforms. Their reforms faced opposition and they lacked the political machinery to ensure that they were implemented in the provinces. Thus, by the time of the Anglo-Russian invasion the government wanted desperately to rejuvenate enthusiasm for republicanism and unite the Dutch under a new form of government. Although it appeared that the government could fall, the invasion provided an excellent opportunity to bring about this unity.⁵⁴

The relationship between the press and the Batavian government conformed to the principles of the revolutionary press suggested by Popkin and noted above. Newspapers like the *Leydse Courant* were the government's means of communicating its message to the public. One of its most

consistent messages throughout the invasion was a cry for the Dutch to unite against a hostile invader. Such proclamations were especially prominent in the early days before the English had even landed. After receiving news of a failed attempt by the English on 13 August to convince Admiral Story to surrender by telling him that they had already landed 20,000 troops in Holland, the *Courant* published a speech from the president to the representatives in the Legislative Assembly. The president implores them to be brave against all "open attacks, deceit of the people, and betrayal."⁵⁵ In a proclamation to the people published two days later, the government informs the population that the "Enemy" has come to bring not only violence but "ruses" and "deception" as well. In fact, the enemy is among a part of the population and in order to maintain the "brave Friend of the Fatherland...in his courage" measures must be put in place against certain "malignant persons." Thus, some civil rights under the constitution are suspended allowing police to arrest suspected persons and authorising the government to search foreigners who do not have passports.⁵⁶ Against these deceptions, the President encourages people to remember what is at stake: "Freedom and Independence," the "representative order," and the "enforcement of the Constitution adopted

⁵⁴ Alexander Grab, *Napoleon and the Transformation of Europe* (New York, 2003), 61-64; and Schama, 354-68 and 389.

⁵⁵ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 28 August 1799.

⁵⁶ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 30 August 1799.

by the People.” With so much to defend, the President expects that armed forces, their officers, and the citizen representatives will exhibit the “courage of Batavians” and emulate the actions of seventeenth-century naval heroes like Tromp and De Ruyter.⁵⁷

It may seem ironic that the president of the Batavian Republic would invoke these heroes of the United Provinces against a force attempting to re-establish this old order. However, it actually is quite suitable because this force is also the old enemy of Tromp and De Ruyter: England. As the French ambassador, Florent Guyot, proclaimed to the Batavian Assembly, he was appointed to maintain the “independence and liberty of the Batavian people” and thereby open “new sources of prosperity” but also to protect against that enemy who “enjoys but a shadow of freedom” but cannot “tolerate” that another “people [can] indeed be free.” This enemy is England and it has always been an enemy of Dutch “independence and prosperity” dating back to Elizabeth I who only helped the Dutch rebels against Spain in the hope of acquiring the country for her own kingdom.⁵⁸ Thus, while the English claim that the objective of the operation is to restore the Stadtholder, the Dutch press through its selection of speeches to publish refutes this notion and puts the current

invasion in the context of a long history of Anglo-Dutch rivalry.

Indeed, the *Courant*, like *Le Moniteur*, repeatedly contrasts the brave commitment of the Batavians to their constitution with the immoral and treacherous character of the English. Something which is, understandably, completely ignored in the English press but prominently declared in the Dutch press, is the damage and plundering caused by English soldiers. For example, after the Battle of Bergen the press reports that “messages are coming in from all sides” describing the “plundering, atrocities, rape and murders” at the hands of the English and Russians during the offensive.⁵⁹ Later in October when the coastal towns of Lemmer and Medemblik were recaptured from the seaborne British troops that had occupied them, the journalist reports that “our indignation rises” upon hearing more and more stories of “horrific devastation...and looting” committed by the British before leaving. They took any provisions they could find and then set fire to the warehouses in the towns. These deeds reveal the true intentions of the English.⁶⁰ The journalist continues by adding that no longer can people remain “ignorant.” Now the Batavian people, and “the supporters of Orange, in particular” can “assess what they expected of these Saviours” who came with “honeyed words to outwit” but showed through their deeds

⁵⁷ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 26 August 1799.

⁵⁸ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 5 August 1799.

⁵⁹ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 25 September 1799.

⁶⁰ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 18 October 1799.

that their true intentions had nothing to do with restoring the Stadtholder, but rather were to simply destroy the wealth and seapower of the Batavian Republic.⁶¹ The President of the Executive Authority echoes these sentiments during a speech to assembled soldiers after York's capitulation. He declares that all "true Patriots" will rejoice in the "quickly approaching complete redemption of our Fatherland" as the British troops leave. Meanwhile, those who "undertook attempts, in public" to restore their "beloved Prince" are now "blushing" with shame after the murder, plundering, and burning by the enemy in whom they had placed their hope. It must now be clear to them that the goals of the enemy "were completely different than what they had always depicted."⁶² It thus appears to be the hope of the government that the violence of this invasion has united people under one common goal of building a strong republic to resist the efforts of the immoral English to destroy it.

Outside of these comments demonstrating the foolishness of the Orangist hopes of restoration from the British, dissenters receive little comment. As noted above, when they were mentioned it was to demonstrate the folly of treachery and the just reward of those who betray the republic. This is especially true of the sailors who mutinied against Admiral Story and were taken prisoner by

the British. On 25 September, the *Courant* published an account of the captured sailors being held on the island of Texel. It notes that while letters out of London reveal that the population is "drunk with joy" over the capture of the Dutch fleet, "the English sailors are angry about the way in which the Fleet surrendered." Furthermore, the Dutch sailors have "already received in part their wages for their unfaithful treachery." When the fleet was ordered to depart for England, the Dutch sailors "unanimously" refused to weigh anchor. The English therefore stationed their own sailors on board and even then the English admiral thought it was necessary to escort the Dutch ships with 8 ships of the line.⁶³ Thus, the treachery of the Dutch sailors caused even the English to despise them and they were humiliated with not even being considered responsible enough to pilot their own ships.

The main emphasis of news stories however is placed on demonstrating the bravery of Batavian soldiers and citizen volunteers in particular. For instance, the *Leydse Courant's* account of the British landing differs significantly from that of *The Times*. Whereas *The Times* states that the day "terminated entirely in favour of the British" the *Courant* notes that the commander of the Dutch army, General

⁶¹ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 18 October 1799.

⁶² *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 21 October 1799.

⁶³ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 25 September 1799. I would like to thank my father-in-law, Jacob R. van Gelder for his help in translating this difficult passage.

Daendels, was in “the hottest fire” and was “well pleased” with the small Batavian force who fought the British force of so “great a strength [that] it could not be known with certainty” to a standstill in the sand dunes just off the beach.⁶⁴ Regarding the Franco-Batavian offensive on 10 September, the *Courant* copies a letter from Adjutant-General Mahler who writes that he “cannot praise enough” the bravery of the Batavian soldiers during the offensive, even if they ultimately failed to dislodge the British. This was certainly not from lack of willingness to fight but rather from the intensity of the enemy fire “which even the French heroic courage could not overcome.” While the offensive ended in failure, it demonstrates the “loyalty and heroic courage” of the Batavian and French soldiers, and if they showed such courage in the first attack, how much more can be expected from the coming offensives?”⁶⁵ In the context of apparent low support for the republican regime, it was important to highlight how strong the morale of the army was in defending it, as an inspiration to civilians that it was something that merited a strong defence.

Particular emphasis is given to the role of citizen volunteers in overcoming the dangers posed by the invasion and insurgents. Even with news of the contested British landing at the Helder, the *Courant* also reported that a citizen

representative presented to the Executive Authority two separate requests from citizens in The Hague. These citizens volunteered two companies of men for the “defence of the Fatherland” so long as they were permitted to elect their own officers. The Executive Authority was of course delighted to hear this news and a follow-up story in the next paper reports that the companies will be employed in the “preservation of domestic peace.”⁶⁶ Such armed citizen companies did show their commitment to the regime in suppressing Orangist uprisings. The *Courant* reports that when Orangists attempted to take control of Arnhem, the local armed citizens fought them off.⁶⁷ Other companies volunteered to go to the frontlines. The *Courant*, in its account of the Battle of Bergen, also published a letter from General Brune which praises the role played by Batavians and particularly the National Guards who “wanted to take part in the action,” with the Rotterdam and Delft volunteers showing particular distinction.⁶⁸ The *Courant* then puts great emphasis on the role played by volunteers and armed citizens in achieving victory. Citizen involvement was vital to a successful republican regime and any news of citizens willingly putting themselves into the fight against the Old Regime was a vital propaganda tool for a government trying to promote its legitimacy.

⁶⁴ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 30 August 1799.

⁶⁵ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 13 September 1799.

⁶⁶ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 30 August 1799 and 2 September 1799.

⁶⁷ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 13 September 1799.

⁶⁸ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 25 September 1799.

Thus, we see that the *Courant*, through its journalists and its selection of what speeches and proclamations to publish, sought to highlight the popular nature of this campaign, making into a fight for survival against an enemy that wanted to take away Dutch independence, freedom, and prosperity. It is no surprise then that victories were greeted with significantly more celebration than they were in France. After the Battle of Bergen, the *Courant* publishes a speech from the President of the Executive Authority which praises the actions of the “United Republican Armies” and their victory over the “strength of treacherous Enemies.” This victory signifies that England’s efforts to “remove Virtue and Freedom from here” through “ruse and mischief” will fail as a result of their “cowardice.” In celebration, the representatives resolved to hold a “public assembly” the next day.⁶⁹

The capitulation of York saw even greater celebration. The *Courant* publishes a speech by the President to assembled soldiers and other citizens. In it he announces that an event has just occurred of which “there is no example in the history books of our Fatherland,” something which “surpasses anything we expected.” The President presents the invasion as a seemingly hopeless struggle in which the small army of Batavians had to fight off a much larger enemy that wanted to “banish” the freedom and

independence of the Republic and “bring us under the yoke of treacherous England.” Instead through great victories in battle like the one at Castricum on 6 October, and the failure of an Orangist uprising to materialise, “everything was changed for the better.” The enemy was forced to return to his own country and the “criminal hopes” of the Orangists thwarted.⁷⁰ This was thus a triumph of the people and republican principles and there appears to be some hope of the greater national unity with the decline of the Orangists.

Comparisons and Conclusions

It is now clear that the varied social and political contexts of each country had a significant impact on the way this one event was portrayed in their respective newspapers. It is difficult to determine to what degree the messages promoted in these papers were accepted by the public, but it is certainly clear that governments and editors hoped to move public opinion in a certain direction. *The Times* demonstrated a desire to show the public the important role Britain was playing in overthrowing the tyrannical French republican regime and justifying an expedition which had generated high expectations which were quickly dashed after the landing occurred. *Le Moniteur Universel* meanwhile demonstrated a preoccupation with other news stories but

⁶⁹ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 23 September 1799.

⁷⁰ *Leydse Courant* (Leiden), 21 October 1799 and 23 October 1799.

when it did turn to the Anglo-Russian invasion it was adamant in demonstrating the continued strength of republican armies to a population demoralised by internal strife and defeats abroad. The *Leydse Courant* meanwhile sought to generate support for an ailing republican regime racked by scandal and dissention. A defence of the Fatherland against a ruthless enemy provided just the tool it needed to work towards this goal.

The differences in the news coverage in each national context are clear enough, but what about the similarities? There is of course the obvious one that each paper is promoting a message in support of its own war effort, but what beyond that? One of the most prominent themes is the vilification of the enemy with notions of a corrupt and immoral national character. This is contrasted with the virtuous character of one's own nation. Recent historiography has deemphasised the role played by nationalism in the revolutionary and Napoleonic period. Michael Broers has asserted that throughout the Napoleonic empire, the traditional argument that resistance to Napoleon's rule was based on nationalism is a myth. Instead, the struggle against Napoleon was "one of diversity against standardization, of tradition against innovation, of dynastic loyalty against usurpation."⁷¹ Johan Joor has applied Broers' thesis to expressions of resistance

⁷¹ Michael Broers, *Europe under Napoleon 1799-1815* (London, 1996), 3 and 269-70.

in the Netherlands just after the Batavian period, from 1806 to 1813. He argues that resistance to Napoleon's regime was frequent in the Netherlands but it was about preserving the past not establishing a nation-state. It was a response to unpopular and invasive government actions like conscription or increased taxation. Even nation-wide revolts like the one led by Gisbertus van Hogendorp which overthrew the Napoleonic regime were clear in their goals to restore traditional notions of power and government.⁷² However, Ute Planert, in examining the pre-Napoleonic foundations of modern German states, notes that already in the Seven Years War "national ideas became increasingly prevalent" even if limited to certain classes and regions.⁷³ The information presented here bears out this conclusion. The newspapers examined present clear ideas of their own nation and its differences with others. Furthermore, the rhetoric of the defence of liberty, independence, and the Fatherland prevalent in the speeches published in the *Leydse Courant* seem to indicate a strong nationalist message being pushed by the government. However, this study does not examine how these messages were received. Indeed, the Batavian Directory

⁷² Johan Joor, *De Adelaar en het Lam: Onrust, opruiing en onwilligheid in Nederland ten tijde van het Koninkrijk Holland en de Inlijving bij het Franse Keizerrijk (1806-1813)* (Amsterdam, 2000), 683-90.

⁷³ Ute Planert, "International Conflict, War, and the Making of Modern Germany 1740-1815," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Germany History*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford, 2011), 92.

did not inspire much enthusiasm after the invasion. Even General Daendels, the hero of the Batavian army, resigned his commission in 1800 after becoming discouraged with the weakness of the regime.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the messages likely did not go without any impact. Certainly those who resisted Napoleon's rule were motivated to do so by more traditional reasons, but this does not preclude the influence of nationalist ideas on their actions, it merely demonstrates that they were not the pre-eminent cause for revolt as was suggested by later nineteenth-century intellectuals. It is certainly clear from this study that through the lens of the press, the experience of an event was the result of very different national circumstances.

⁷⁴ Van Uythoven, 19.

AL-JABARTI'S RELIGIOUS HIERARCHY AND BONAPARTE'S REVOLUTIONARY HYPOCRISY

by Pouyan Tabasinejad

“His [Bonaparte's] saying ‘(all people) are equal in the eyes of God’ the Almighty, this is a lie and stupidity. How can this be when God has made some superior to others as is testified by the dwellers in the Heavens and on the Earth!”
– Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, on Napoleon Bonaparte's first proclamation to Egypt.¹

This passage from Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's *‘Aja’ib al-Athar fi ‘I-Tarajim wa’l Akhbar* or *History of Egypt* has often been derided as an example of the distance between Islamic and modern European thought. This view is exemplified by Charles Wendell, who wrote that it “sheds a bright light over the gulf that lay between the world view of al-Jabarti's Islam and that implicit in the revolutionary message of the spokesman for the modern European nation-state.”² However, such ideas are not only “Orientalist” (in the Saidian sense) in their analysis (as observed by M.M Ruiz), but also trapped in the progressionary rhetoric

of traditional Western historiography.³ However, this passage clearly does show that al-Jabarti, writing not for the modern academic world but rather for his small circle of friends, felt a kind of revulsion at the idea of equality.⁴ That is to say that the idea of equality, as illustrated by Bonaparte's proclamation, went against his sensibilities and values, which could be described as “religious-hierarchical,” that is mobilizing Islam and God to articulate an idea of a just and divinely ordained hierarchy. This paper will attempt not only to show what these values were, but how Bonaparte's later proclamations became more and more “anti-revolutionary” and spoke increasingly in the value-language of al-Jabarti and his presumably ideologically similar fellow religious aristocracy rather than in the value-language of “liberty, fraternity, and equality.” Finally, this paper will also attempt to advocate a new consideration of the seminal importance of values in historical scholarship, and attempts to address the issues with such a new consideration.

¹ Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, trans. by Thomas Phillip and Moshe Perlmann, *History of Egypt* [*‘Aja’ib al-Athar fi ‘I-Tarajim wa’l Akhbar*] (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1994), III: 8.

² Charles Wendell, *The Evolution of the Egyptian National Image* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 115.

³ Mario Ruiz, “Orientalist and Revisionist Histories of Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti.” *Middle East Critique*, (2009), 271.

⁴ Ruiz, 279.

The Worldviews of the Sunni Muslim
Ulama at the Time of Bonaparte's
Invasion of Egypt

To understand al-Jabarti's values and worldview, we must place the thinker within his social and ideological-moral context as an elite Sunni Muslim scholar in Ottoman Egypt in the late 18th and early 19th century. The *ulama*'s tradition of wandering for knowledge allowed the development of a system which created a sense of identity and philosophical transmission across the vast expanse of the Islamic world⁵. This meant that a sense of consciousness developed among religious scholars which allowed them to an extent transcend their geographical distance. This interconnectedness allowed for a shared sense of values among these religious scholars (i.e. *ulama*). As articulated by Lars Bjorneboe, the Sunni Muslim scholars in Ottoman lands had a strong sense of

order and hierarchy, founded upon "a belief in the unquestionable duty of Muslims to obey their rulers, and the inherent sinfulness of any rebellion against the established ruler."⁶ This observation by Bjorneboe shows what was meant above by a "religious-hierarchical" value system; the hierarchy itself is divinely and religiously ordained, and to act against the

hierarchy is to commit a sin, i.e. to act against God's designs. In this divinely ordained social-political order, social mobility was accepted but closely watched and regulated to prevent the destruction of the order.⁷ The *ulama* were further considered to be



the guardians and esoteric interpreters of Islamic knowledge and law.⁸ This is the social and moral milieu out of which al-Jabarti and his histories sprung, and it will be important to keep these values and worldviews in mind below.

⁵ Lars Bjorneboe, *In Search of the True Political Position of the 'Ulama*. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2007), 33.

⁶ Bjorneboe, 23.

⁷ Bjorneboe, 24.

⁸ Bjorneboe, 33.

Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti

The American historian Juan Cole calls al-Jabarti a “Cairene patrician” in his book *Napoleon’s Egypt*.⁹ While this may be somewhat of an oversimplification, al-Jabarti did indeed come from a long line of high-ranking religious scholars at the al-Azhar *medrese* and had (most likely) inherited some considerable measure of wealth. His ancestors are reported to have come to Cairo from the Jabart (now Djibouti) region around the beginning of 16th century. He belong to the Hanafi school of Islamic jurisprudence, as did his family. His “seventh grandfather” became the *sheykh* of the Jabart *riwaq*, or college, of al-Azhar, after which the office was passed from father to son until Abd al-Rahman himself. His father was well-connected familially and socially to the Cairo elite and his grandmother was a wealthy woman who endowed a number of buildings (i.e. she created a *waqf*, as part of the *awqaf* endowment system in the Islamic world) to support him economically.¹⁰ In this way, al-Jabarti was indeed in some ways a “patrician” of the *ulama* class (which was never truly caste-like in Egypt), and this upper-class status will have to be kept in mind in the analysis below.¹¹

⁹ Juan Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt: Invading the Middle East* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 34.

¹⁰ Bjorneboe, 89.

¹¹ Bjorneboe, 42

Al-Jabarti’s Audience

It is important to describe the nature of al-Jabarti’s writings in order to make sure that they are being analysed in their proper historical and social context. What must be remembered is that al-Jabarti’s writings were manuscripts made for a small circle of elite literate people. As such, they were written in an environment very different than most modern writers producing works in societies where printing presses were easily accessible. According to Bjorneboe, writings in such a context would be much more personal than modern manuscripts, and would serve to buttress a position made in a face to face debate rather than to create such debates. The author would be much more acquainted with his audience and would not be writing with the general public or readership in mind. Therefore, his writings would be tailored to match and be in dialogue with the opinions and worldviews of his audience, which he would know far more intimately than would a modern author writing for a mass audience. This meant that his writings take on more of the character of letters addressed to a small circle of friends as opposed to histories written to be read by people far outside of his time and social niche.¹²

¹² Bjorneboe, 56

The “Religious-hierarchical“ Worldview of al-Jabarti

It is important to clearly define the notion of a religious-hierarchy worldview hinted at above, as it is a fundamental concept which will be referred to constantly in this paper. As it has already been alluded to above, a rehashing of the long history of hierarchy in Islamic thought will not be done. Rather, one’s attention should be directed towards the nuances of such a worldview and attempts to understand it. The fundamental concept which makes itself known through al-Jabarti’s writings is a sense of *rightness in hierarchy*. To al-Jabarti, and other pre-modern Muslim thinkers, hierarchy is good because it is in accordance to God making “some superior to others.” This superiority is a nuanced and complex concept which is not readily comprehensible to those raised with discourses of equality. However, al-Jabarti’s superiority seems to find similarity to notions of nobility and baseness. For example, al-Jabarti writes on the importance of kings and rulers “to achieve order in the realm” without whose “force and authority... the base would prevail over the noble.”¹³ Therefore, in al-Jabarti’s worldview, hierarchy, with all the might required to perpetuate it, is necessary to create a just and right society in which the noble, those made superior by God, are protected from the base.

Al-Jabarti outlines the hierarchical bases for a just society in his introduction to the *‘Aja’ib al-Athar fi ‘I-Tarajim wa’l Akhbar*. He describes “five categories of human beings who dispense justice.” The first is the Prophets, who bring God’s message and guide humanity on the right path (AJ10). The second group is the *ulama*, the heirs of the prophets who follow and accept the prophets perfectly and “are the stewards of God and the elite of the human race,” dispensing legal opinions and creating guideposts for the right path.¹⁴ The third group is that of kings and rulers, who, as stated above, use their force and authority to keep order in society and heed the *shari’ah*.¹⁵ The fourth group is the “middle class of people... who return good for good and evil for evil.”¹⁶ The fifth category, and perhaps the most interesting, is that of “those who exercise governance over themselves.... They are included among the just since every individual human being is responsible to his subjects, i.e. his limbs and faculties in accordance with the saying ‘All of you are shepherds, and every one of you are responsible for his flock.’”¹⁷ Through this description of a just society (especially the last section), we can see that al-Jabarti saw hierarchy as existing not only between individuals, but even *within* individuals. To him, all of life, that is divinely ordained and orderly life, seems to be one large

¹³ al-Jabarti, *History*, I : 8.

¹⁴ al-Jabarti, *History*, I: 11.

¹⁵ al-Jabarti, *History*, I: 12-13.

¹⁶ al-Jabarti, *History*, I: 15.

¹⁷ al-Jabarti, *History*, I: 14.

hierarchy which works in perfect balance with its constituent parts. This order appears to be fundamental to God's law and must be protected. From this point of view, we can see why al-Jabarti will condemn the French for destroying their hierarchical, and therefore right and divinely guided, society.

Al-Jabarti's Reaction to French Revolutionary Rhetoric

Throughout al-Jabarti's descriptions of the French occupation (1798–1801) and the society around him (the ones cited in this paper being the *'Aja'ib al-Athar fi 'I-Tarajim wa'l Akhbar* and *Tarikh Muddat Al-Faransis Bi Misr*) the religious-hierarchical worldview described above is present. However, this worldview crystallizes itself most clearly when reacting to a worldview governed by values conflicting with that of al-Jabarti and his like-minded clerical colleagues: that of the French Revolution with its values of “liberty, fraternity, and

equality.” The passage quoted at the beginning of this paper is perhaps the most salient expression of this “religious-hierarchical” worldview and value-set reacting to values different from its own. In this passage, where the notion of equality is called “a lie and stupidity,” there is not only a diatribe against the ideology of a foreign invader, but also an implicit assumption that a just and divinely ordained society entails hierarchy and social difference. When al-Jabarti writes “God has made some superior to others as is testified by the dwellers in the Heavens and on the Earth,” it shows that

to al-Jabarti, as explained above, God Himself has created the hierarchy of society, one which is natural and must be followed. The French, therefore, with their notion of equality overturn this divinely ordained hierarchy. This explains why al-Jabarti reacted so



violently to this idea in this passage. This view is in line with Bjorneboe's description of the Sunni *ulama's* view that to go against the established order is to commit a sin. This implies, in line with the religious-hierarchical worldview, that the

French that al-Jabarti saw were a sinful people in his eyes.

Al-Jabarti continues this thread of sinfulness and demonstrates some knowledge of events in Europe. He paints the French as working against any sense of rightness according to his religious-hierarchical conception of it. In addition to their unholy idea of equality, the French committed other sins against divine hierarchy, such as killing priests, destroying churches, and having “rebelled against their sultan six years ago and killed him.”¹⁸ Ami Ayalon has explored, using semantic analysis, the reaction of al-Jabarti and other Muslim-Arab writers to the French Revolution of 1789-99. He aptly explains that Arab thinkers traditionally saw revolt as “the antithesis of obedience—a strongly recommended principle [referring to obedience], even a strict duty, of every Muslim.”¹⁹ While revolt was something which was to be avoided, revolution, the distinction between the two being that revolution entails a radical overturning of the pre-existing social and political order while revolt does not, was “inconceivable” to Arab Muslim thinkers before the end of the 19th century.²⁰ To describe the French Revolution, al-Jabarti uses the verb *Kh-r-*

j, which, according to Ayalon, means literally to “depart or deviate,” and, in a political context, this verb carries an implication of denunciation and negativity.²¹ That is to say, *Kh-r-j* is to go against, or deviate from, the established and divine order.

One of Bonaparte’s appeals to the Muslim population of Egypt was that he had destroyed the Papal See, “which was always exhorting the Christians to make war with Islam.”²² However, this seems to be a plan which backfired, for al-Jabarti takes this to mean that “those people are opposed to both Christians and Muslims, and do not hold fast to any religion.”²³ This analysis of the French as outside the bounds of religion is a condemnation; in essence, it means that they are outside of, and have destroyed, the right hierarchical order as determined by God because of their “revolution.” Al-Jabarti not only saw French actions and ideology as wrong and against God, but also hypocritical. For example, he notes how the French “follow this rule: great and small, high and low, male and female are all equal. Sometimes they break this rule according to their whims and inclinations or reasoning.”²⁴ What al-Jabarti is communicating here is a feeling of disgust. To this hierarchical Islamic cleric, these “Franks” (*Firinjīyah*) are going against God’s law and nature

¹⁸ Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, trans. by Shmuel Moreh, *Al-Jabarti's Chronicle of the First Seven Months of the French Occupation of Egypt* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975), 17.

¹⁹ Ami Ayalon, “From Fitna to Thawra.” *Studia Islamica* (1987), 146.

²⁰ Ayalon, 146.

²¹ Ayalon, 148

²² al-Jabarti, *Chronicle*, 41.

²³ al-Jabarti, *Chronicle*, 47.

²⁴ al-Jabarti, *Chronicle*, 43.

itself. In a continuation of this idea, immediately following it in the same paragraph, al-Jabarti moves directly into the French people's immoral and unclean habits:

“Their women do not veil themselves and have no modesty; they do not care whether they cover their private parts. Whenever a Frenchman has to perform an act of nature he does so wherever he happens to be, even in full view of people, and goes away as he is, without washing his private parts after defecation. If he is a man of taste and refinement he wipes himself with whatever he finds, even with a paper with writing on it, otherwise he remains as he is. They have intercourse with any woman who pleases them and vice versa. Sometimes one of their women goes into a barber's shop, and invites him to shave her pubic hair. If he wishes he can take his fee in kind.”²⁵

The veracity of such claims is not important here. What is important is the fact that al-Jabarti sees the French's rebellion against and execution of their Sultan, their irreligiosity and destruction of churches and murdering of priests, their hypocritical equality, and their sexual immodesty and ritual uncleanness as part of one phenomenon. The implication is clear; to go against God's divine order and hierarchy is to be disgusting, base, and

impure both physically and morally (a distinction between the physical and the moral which is not quite made).

The concept of (particularly women's) sexual modesty should be explained further. Saba Mahmood, the poststructuralist feminist scholar, examines the concept of modesty and being covered in Islamic society and thought. While her work mainly focuses on contemporary societies, her ideas nevertheless provide a way to understand this concept in Islamic thought. According to Mahmood, the Islamic juristic tradition views sexual relationships outside of marriage as a cause of sedition or *fitna* within a community.²⁶ She writes, “Islam, unlike a number of other orthodox religious traditions (for example, strands of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity) does not place a high premium on sexual abstinence and regards the pursuit of sexual pleasure (within the bounds of a marital relationship) as a necessary virtue both for men and women.”²⁷ However, because it is assumed “that women are the objects of sexual desire and men the desiring subjects,” women are expected to “hide their charms” as to not excite the sexual energies of non-related Muslim men.²⁸ Therefore, when al-Jabarti writes, directly after he writes on the Revolution's excesses, that the French do not have any

²⁵ al-Jabarti, *Chronicle*, 43.

²⁶ Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: the Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 2005), 110.

²⁷ Mahmood, 110.

²⁸ Mahmood, 110.

concept of modesty and have sexual relations with anyone who pleases them, he is depicting the French as having gone against God's designs and causing a situation in which *fitna*, immorality, and impurity reign. These undesirable characteristics are direct results of their killing of their sultan, their social levelling, and above all their rejection of God's divinely ordained hierarchy.

The Hierarchical Turn in Napoleonic Proclamations

The extent to which the Napoleonic regime adapted to the social and political nature of its

conquered societies

has been well

attested to by

scholars of the

subject, perhaps

most cogently by

Alexander Grab.

However, the

ideological

adaptations of

Bonaparte's

administration to the

religious-hierarchical

worldview described

above are perhaps

the most interesting examples of this

trend. Beyond the obvious Islamic

discourse of Bonaparte's administration

(for example their assertion that the post-

Revolution French were a type of

"muslim," i.e. monotheist), one notices

that the French proclamations addressed to the Egyptians of the period began to discard the Revolutionary rhetoric of equality and liberty and instead began to speak in the moral language of al-Jabarti and his clerical colleagues. These proclamations increasingly use the concepts of high and low, of order, and betray an inherently hierarchical sense of Islamic justice and rightness. Whether this is the result of better translators and scribes for the proclamations is not relevant in this aspect. The fact that the rhetoric of equality and liberty and the French Revolutionary discourse in general was gradually, or not so gradually,

replaced by a

hierarchical

understanding and

moral framework

which was in direct

opposition to it

shows how the

intricacies of moral

understanding must

be negotiated in

such "cross-

cultural"

interactions, in

addition to

revealing some

additional nuances in what Juan Cole calls

Bonaparte's "new social context of a

Muslim-Arab realm."²⁹



²⁹ Cole, 142.

The final reference made to equality in French proclamations in Egypt seems to happen in February 1799, where the proclamation ends with “Respect the judgement of your Lord who has created you and set equality among you.”³⁰ However, numerous references to hierarchical concepts such as “high and low”³¹ and (the first being in 24 December 1798) “riff-raff” (*ju’aydiyya*) are made directly by the French proclamations (excluding the references to these concepts made by the French supervised *diwans*).³² These references are in addition to mobilization of concepts such as nobility,³³ and honouring the *ulama* and notables,³⁴ and calling the *ulama* who constituted the national *diwan* of Egypt “the best of people, the most perfect in intellect and management”³⁵ and also “mighty and honoured people of the Diwan.”³⁶ While the praising of their intellect and management is not necessarily a hierarchical statement, the use of the concept of perfection and the notion of “best of people” strongly hints at a hierarchical worldview and language. The concepts mobilized in the French proclamations and the difference between the first proclamation and subsequent ones

is pivotal in understanding how Bonaparte’s administration adapted its Revolutionary discourse and worldview to that of an intensely hierarchical Islamic society in Egypt.

Instead of bringing the “enlightened” values of equality and liberty to Egypt, the French and Bonaparte found themselves increasingly adopting the values of the religious hierarchical society which they were ruling. In his article *Playing Muslim*, Juan Cole uses Feo Rodrigues’ concept of colonial creolization, which Rodrigues defined as “a creative process crafted from the tensions of colonial societies, subverting the daily practice of colonialism in many social domains.”³⁷ We can see this happening in the process described above, which can be termed the *creolization of values*. Cole defines the type of creolization happening in Egypt during the French occupation as “characteristic of preindustrial colonialism, before the European marginal superiority in arms, productivity, and organization permitted a more thoroughgoing imposition of cultural and institutional forms on the colonized.”³⁸ What Cole observes of cultural and institutional forms can also be said of values. This type of preindustrial colonial creolization expressed itself clearly in the gradual adoption of the values of the religious-hierarchical society of Egypt’s elite seen in the French proclamations

³⁰ Saladin Boustany, *Bonaparte's Proclamations as Recorded by 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti* (Cairo: Al-Arab Bookshop, 1971), 44.

³¹ Boustany, 31, 82, and 83.

³² Boustany, 23 and 79.

³³ Boustany, 83.

³⁴ Boustany, 80.

³⁵ Boustany, 89.

³⁶ Boustany, 89.

³⁷ Cole, 125.

³⁸ Cole, 126.

during the period. This more delicate and nuanced colonialism may also be a reason why Ami Ayalon observed that Arab Muslim thinkers only began to see revolution as a legitimate political desire after the 19th century, when whole-sale “industrial colonialism” began to be practiced in Arab-speaking lands, including Egypt. This kind of accommodation of a hierarchical society in Egypt may also have shaped Bonaparte’s (by then Napoleon) policies toward other hierarchical societies, most notably Poland.

Conclusion: Towards a History of Values

This paper has attempted to show the existence of a religious-hierarchical worldview and morality among the Egyptian clerical elite at the time of the French invasion and occupation and to sketch how these values were co-opted and accommodated by the French through the proclamations they addressed to Egyptian Muslims. It has desired to prove that although these religious-hierarchical values were the antithesis of the values of the French Revolution, they were still accommodated by the human products of the Revolution who came to Egypt in a process of preindustrial “creolization of values” in the vein of Cole and Rodrigues. This is a new perspective—or at least the first steps toward such a perspective—in analysing interactions between Islamic and modern Western societies and perhaps even more broadly between non-Western

non-modern societies (and even non-modern Western societies) and modern Western/“Westernized” societies. By acknowledging that premodern Islamic societies were built on the idea of a righteous, religiously-ordained hierarchy, scholars of the region can gain a greater and more nuanced understanding, which the often unquestioned assumptions of the universal applicability of modern values such as equality and liberty in the modern West often prevent.

On a grander scale, the arguments made in this paper advocate for the greater importance to the issue of values in historical scholarship and the greater field of the humanities. If scholars truly wish to gain a sincerely unbiased understanding of the societies they are studying, they need to overcome this initial, and one could say conditioned, discomfort with values (such as “moral relativism”) which often go against what they have been taught. To understand a society, an observer must be willing to attempt to look at the world through the eyes of that society, even if the assumptions of such a worldview go against the values which they have been taught and assumed were beyond question or judgement. The fact remains that, just like al-Jabarti, much of the world throughout history—or at least much of the Islamic world—held a hierarchical conception of righteousness and justice. To assume the primacy of Western values such as equality and liberty is, one could say, merely another

form of imperialism that could be termed “moral imperialism” or the “imperialism of values.”

Regardless of the larger implications of this study, its main and more immediate goal is to show that a hierarchical worldview existed in Egypt at the time of the French invasion and occupation. This worldview was based on an exceedingly complex logic which saw all of human life as a hierarchy, down to the individual's control over one's limbs and body. This hierarchy was determined by God and was seen as the only right and ordered state of affairs, and to against it was to go against God Himself. This is how al-Jabarti saw the French after the Revolution. They overturned God's design and were punished with the *fitna*, moral impurity and physical uncleanness which al-Jabarti describes so vividly. Perhaps because of this very strong belief in the religious-hierarchical worldview, Bonaparte and his administration could not impose their values of equality and liberty upon these clerics. This is reflected in the moral creolization which emerged in the increasingly hierarchical language of the French proclamation to the Muslim Egyptians they were ruling. It seems that only when industrialization provides colonial powers with unprecedented military, economic and political disparity with Muslim societies, ushering in Cole's description of industrial colonialism, can Europeans impose their values upon Islamic societies. This imposition is

reflected in Ami Ayalon's observation that “revolution” only became an acceptable and desirable undertaking to Arab thinkers in the end of the 19th century, when the religious-hierarchical view was “beaten” out of Arab-speaking lands by the might of industrial warfare and domination.

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REVOLUTIONARY IMPERIALISM IN THE EAST

FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS AS THE FOUNDATION OF A NEW FORM OF IMPERIALISM

by Sheragim Jenabzadeh

The history of Napoleonic France has produced a myriad of scholarly material dedicated to understanding not only the nature of governance during the empire, but also its ramifications on surrounding states. Curiously, however, little attention is given to Napoleonic policies in the east, be that the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, or even Persia. This is not to say that there has been no work detailing Napoleon's expedition in the Levant in 1798. Rather much of the materials serve as preludes to Napoleonic policies on the European continent in the following decade. When these works do seek to understand the nature of French rule in the Middle East, as Ussama Makdisi, the author of *Ottoman Orientalism* points out, they focus on how Europeans perceived the orient, or how such representations were resisted by the eastern intellectual elite.¹ Furthermore, much has been written about the cultural consequences of European excursions into the Middle East starting from the French expedition of 1798.² Post-colonialist

historical interpretations of western impact on native political and cultural mores have become so widespread and politicized as to cause something of an oriental version of Historikerstreit.³ The focus of this essay then, is to highlight the connection between European global ambitions, French revolutionary thought, and the utilization of these principles for the creation and preservation of imperial rule in the Middle East following the French conquest of Egypt. The introduction of French rule in the Middle East brought with it concepts of political sovereignty and legitimacy, modernization and territorial integrity as key issues in the governance of a modern state. Furthermore, Bonaparte utilized these concepts for the configuration of French imperial status. By guaranteeing these things to local rulers, France established

of the French Occupation, 1798, trans. by Schmule Moreh (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2004).

³ The bicentennial debate about the French invasion took place in among Egyptian historians in 1998. Shimon Shamir, "Egyptian Perceptions of Bonaparte's Expedition: The Bicentennial Debate," in *Napoleon and the French in Egypt and the Holy Land, 1789-1801 : Articles Presented at the 2nd International Congress of Napoleonic Studies, Israel, July 4-11, 1999*, ed. Aryeh Shmuelevitz, Mordechai Gichon, J. David Markham, and David Mendelson (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2002).

¹ Ussama Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," *The American Historical Review* 107 (3) (June 2002): 795.

² Edward W. Said. "Orientalism: The Cultural Consequences of the French Occupation with Egypt," in *Napoleon in Egypt: Al-Jabart's Chronicle*

itself as a modern European supervisor in a region that was increasingly becoming dominated by European powers. Interventions in outer-European domestic issues, therefore, were used to realize the imperial ambitions of the French state.

This imperial expansion outside of Europe was very much necessitated by the difficulties France had been experiencing since the latter part of the eighteenth century. As rapid victories by the revolutionary army on the continent ushered a period of French supremacy in the European theatre, the empire was increasingly becoming restricted in its international connections. French colonies in North America were lost to the British, and the French navy was continuously outmatched by its British counterpart. As the loss of French Canada, Louisiana, and Saint-Dominique began to erode France's image as a world power and damaged French commerce, a renewed sense of colonialism began to take hold among statesmen. Subsequently, the conquest of Egypt was seen as providing France with a new site for the production of Cash crops.⁴ However, coupled with this external and international impetus for conquest across the Mediterranean, was a more internal and political concern. For many in the Directory and the legislature, the expansion of French revolutionary zeal seemed to be winding down just as the

capital was wrought with political instability with swings between the left and right of the political spectrum. The survival of the Directory itself was in doubt as thousands of unoccupied revolutionary soldiers led by Napoleon Bonaparte were set to return to Paris.⁵ Some in the Directory and the legislature found it prudent to carry out another campaign to relieve Paris of this volatile situation. It was largely by Charles Maurice de Talleyrand's initiative, who would later become the Foreign Minister, that the exportation of revolutionary energies was viewed as a necessity following a successful revolution. During his brief stay in the United States, he discerned the project of settling and developing the unexplored territories of North America as having a calming effect on the revolutionary aspirations of the population.⁶ France, restricted in its continental territory, and having lost its maritime colonies was left without such an avenue. It was in this respect that many ideas of the enlightenment such as the Rights of Men and abolition of slavery by the Jacobins were largely rejected by Talleyrand who was much more concerned with the preservation of stability on the European continent. Thus, what we see according to Juan Cole is the emergence of an 18th century neo-conservatism with a renewed interest in colonialism.⁷ The invasion of Egypt was not only the

⁴ Juan Ricardo Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt: Invading the Middle East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 12-13.

⁵ Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt*, 15.

⁶ Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt*, 12.

⁷ Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt*, 13.

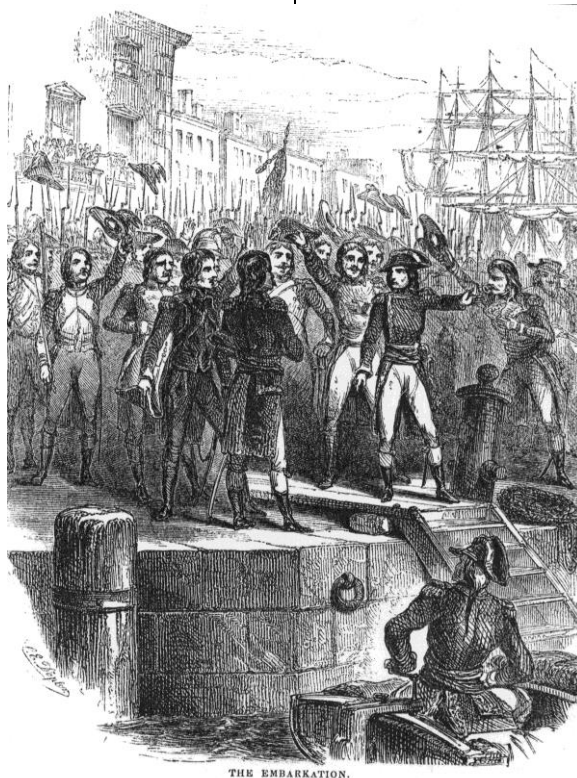
outcome of Anglo-French antagonism. It was also the by-product of economic and revolutionary concerns.

However, if domestic factors are at times the catalyst for foreign policy, international situations act as the compass for the site of their implementation. The desire to harm British trade and, perhaps even take over its empire in India made Egypt as the site of French imperial expansion, all the more likely.⁸ Furthermore, as we shall see later, Napoleon's use of the eastern question against British and eventually Russian interests did not end with the evacuation of Egypt. The eastern policy continued to act in concert with Napoleon's European policy. At the moment, however, the perceived 'sick' Ottoman Empire was seen as ripe for exploitation. On 16 August 1797, Napoleon wrote to the Directory: 'The islands of Corfu, Zante and Cephalonia are more interesting to us than the whole of Italy ... The Empire of the

Turks is crumbling day by day; the possession of these islands will enable us to support it as far as possible, or to take out share of it.... The time is no longer distant

when we shall feel that, to destroy England truly, we shall have to capture Egypt."⁹ With this passage and many others like it, there seems to have been a shift in the relationship between international politics and European conflicts. Although the Seven Year's War was truly a war on an international scale, it remained largely an inter-colonial

European conflict.¹⁰ The desire to strike at established and 'sovereign' states, for the purposes of solving a European contest, marks a stark contrast. European wars no longer involved battles on the continent or in colonies. They spilled over regions farther away from the metropole as Europeans began to utilize issues of territorial sovereignty and political legitimacy of eastern states for the



⁸ Iradj Amini, *Napoleon and Persia: Franco-Persian Relations under the First Empire: Within the Context of the Rivalries between France, Britain and Russia* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999), 10 and 32.

⁹ Amini, 7-8.

¹⁰ Ute Planert, "International Conflict, War, and the Making of Modern Germany, 1740-1815," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

reconfiguration of their own imperial status.

The French landing on the port of Alexandria on 2 July 1798 with 27,000 men and 400 ships began the short period of Napoleonic rule in Egypt.¹¹ While French troops gained control over northern Egypt and its main cities, the Mamlukes were pushed to the south.¹² It is important to note that the French used the issue of territorial integrity as the reason for their invasion. The Mamlukes, who were originally slave soldiers from the Caucasus, were governors of Egypt within the imperial order of the Ottoman Empire. However, as the Porte's grip over the province began to loosen, the Mamlukes deepened their position within Egyptian society and the state.¹³ Napoleon's expedition was, therefore, propagated as a cordial act of suppressing disobedient satraps and the full restoration of Ottoman rule.¹⁴ However, as Juan Cole points out in *Napoleon's Egypt*, the policy of preserving the Ottoman Empire had been abandoned by this point, and the more immediate task was to establish a firm French presence in the region before incursions by other European, though mainly British, nations.¹⁵ Thus, the language of territorial integrity and legitimacy were already brought to the

fore. It is true that the introduction of language such as political legitimacy, sovereignty and territorial integrity would have a lasting effect within the Middle East. However, the political reconfiguration of Egypt by Napoleon in accordance with these concepts would serve the immediate purpose of establishing a new line of political thought implemented by the promotion of new elites more attuned with French interests.

In accordance with basing French rule in Egypt as the will of the people, the creation of general and local assemblies was taken to task. By courting the support of merchants, the *ulama* and the nobility, Bonaparte set to creating a system of French style Directories named Divans, within months of the invasion.¹⁶ Along with local divans, which would be composed of nine members, there also existed a General Divan that first convened on 5 October 1798.¹⁷ According to the historian, F. Charles-Roux, "the very form given by Bonaparte to French rule seemed devised in a way that should rally the natives to it."¹⁸ Imperial control over conquered territories through the construction and manipulation of localized and native governments would be a continuing trend in western imperialism. The creation of local divans would give French rule a different form of legitimacy

¹¹ Nathan Schur, *Napoleon in the Holy Land* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1999), 28.

¹² Schur, 28.

¹³ Schur, 27.

¹⁴ Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt*, 14.

¹⁵ Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt*, 14.

¹⁶ Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt*, 74.

¹⁷ François Charles-Roux, *Bonaparte: Governor of Egypt*, ed. by E. W. Dickes (London: Methuen, 1937), 175.

¹⁸ Charles-Roux, 59.

since theirs, as Charles-Roux points out, was not derived from the Mamlukes or the Turks.¹⁹ This was a new form of legitimacy that had no precedent in Egypt or much of the oriental world. Imperialism through the promotion of native governments creates a certain separation between the conquered territory and the metropole. Regardless of being perceived as a puppet regime or not, the presence of native officials in any form of government gave imperialism, inherently, more legitimacy than one with direct foreign dictation. This was in indeed the line of thought of Napoleon when he denounced the rule of the Mamlukes. According to Al-Jabarti's chronicles, Napoleon lamented the unfortunate rule of the Mamlukes, who "imported from the mountains of Circassia and Georgia have corrupted for ages in the fairest land that is to be found upon the face of the globe. However, the Lord of the Universe, the Almighty, has decreed the end of their power".²⁰ The representation of Mamlukes as foreign invaders, though ironic given that it was presented by a foreigner, seeks to portray the French as a force not akin to the Mamlukes. The Georgian overlords were, thus, shown to be the illegitimate rulers of Egypt because they were not Egyptian.

Such revolutionary thought, that a ruler of a nation must himself be of the

said nation, though directly from the French revolution was utilized and interpreted in a different way outside of France, especially in the non-European world. It was used differently in the sense that because, the same socio-political actors who were instrumental in bringing about the French Revolution were especially not present in the non-European world, a government composed of members of the native population must conduct its duties under the supervision of the French. This is not to say that the French experience in Egypt had no resemblance with their rule in other parts of Europe. Indeed, a French director-general of police in Rome described the inhabitants of an Italian town as "[behaving] like Africans."²¹ In another instance, this time dating to 1811, a report to Napoleon went on to state "Men would never have escaped barbarism, had they continued to live in small isolated settlements: they would have remained sunken in anarchy and brutishness... such was the lot of the peoples of Italy until only recently, before their reunion with France."²² Along with the perception of a backward, undeveloped land, there also existed what French administrators regarded as the stagnant elite culture that had destroyed itself through its own decadence, as was often the view of

¹⁹ Charles-Roux, 53.

²⁰ *Napoleon in Egypt: Al-Jabarti's Chronicle of the French Occupation, 1798*, trans. by Schmule Moreh (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2004), 24.

²¹ Michael Broers, "Cultural Imperialism in a European Context? Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Napoleonic Italy," *Past & Present* 170 (Feb. 2001): 152-80.

²² Broers, 158.

Europeans of the Middle East and the eastern world.²³ Michael Broer's analysis of the French perceptions of Italy, thus, comes close to resembling western views of the orient.²⁴ This therefore begs the question; in what way did French invasion of Egypt and the creation of a French style government dependent upon French supervision differ from the empire in Europe? And if there was no difference could it mean that Western imperialism in the non-European world differed in any way from imperialism on the continent? The answer to such questions can themselves be topics for an entire book. Yet, there is one important difference between French imperialism in Italy and in Egypt. Regardless of the large presence of opposition to the French imposition of a republican system, there still existed local collaborators and sympathisers to the revolutionary cause. For the historian Benedetto Croce, for example, the Neapolitan Republic of January 1799 and the Italian revolutionaries who stood for its cause formed the founding myth of an eventual Italian state.²⁵ The same enthusiasm even among a very small percentage of the population did not exist in Egypt. As it shall be examine below, even concepts such as liberty did not have the same meaning in Egypt as they had in France and among the rest of the

European intellectuals. The introduction of such ideas then was entirely foreign. Even if these two cases are very similar, and the differences between them are negligible, does that in any way reduce the thesis that revolutionary ideas of legitimacy and sovereignty were utilized in the non-European world for the configuration and justification of imperial rule? Even if the Italian and the Egyptian cases are similar, it could be suggested that the shape of imperial rule in Africa and the wider world from Napoleon to the late nineteenth century and onward, was based on a founding model on the European continent itself. The premise that concepts and issues such as legitimacy, sovereignty, modernization and territorial integrity were utilized by western Great Powers to place themselves in a position of power vis-à-vis the dependent states is not lessened in any way.

In creating this relationship of dependence, Bonaparte sought to appeal to the religious sentiments of Egyptians. He announced: "the Lord of the Universe is compassionate and equitable toward mankind, and with the help of the Exalted, from this day forward no Egyptian shall be excluded from admission to eminent positions nor from acquiring high ranks".²⁶ Hence, the banishment of the Mamlukes and the creation of an egalitarian society is not simply a French conception, but a divine plan.

²³ Broers, 162.

²⁴ Broers, 162.

²⁵ John Anthony Davis, *Naples and Napoleon: Southern Italy and the European Revolutions (1780-1860)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 4.

²⁶ *Al-Jabart's Chronicle*, 26.

Subsequently, by “the Exalted”, Bonaparte seems to be referring to himself, and perhaps his revolutionary army, given the rank of messengers of god. Indeed, much can be read into this. However, for the purposes of this essay it is clear that the French were separating their expedition from past invasions and establishing a form of government that would in theory be self-regulating through the will of Egyptians, but with the guidance of the French. Upon the commencement of the General Divan, Bonaparte sent his own representatives to the meetings to report on the proceedings as well as become involved in the debates that ensued.²⁷ The reason given was that the Egyptians had no experience in such political activity. Therefore, the presence of French supervision could alleviate some problems that would arise.²⁸ However, surely Bonaparte also sought to direct the course of policies and laws that would be enacted by the General Divan. Furthermore, the gathering of notables to discuss national issues would in itself be a form of disseminating revolutionary ideas. For Bonaparte “The purpose of the convocation of the General Divan, is to try to accustom the notables of Egypt to the ideas of assembly and government.”²⁹ However, in establishing these institutions, Bonaparte gave the French the position of supervisor, and in effect created a relationship of dependence

between him and the local government. For such political practices to be implemented properly, Egyptians would need to turn to the French for advice.

To further separate the former rule of the Mamlukes and the appointment of governors by the Ottoman sultan, Bonaparte created a new class of ruling elite. That the nobility and the *ulama* (religious class) were chosen to direct the affairs of the state is no unique case compared with later Napoleonic rule. According to Stuart Wolf “What is certain is that the French civilian administrators sought actively to involve the local elites in their experience as the necessary condition of success, ultimately the only sure means of sinking roots and ensuring the viability of the new model.”³⁰ Indeed, the notables including the clergy were utilized as mediators between the French and the general population.³¹ In essence, by disseminating French policies through the use of established notables, especially in the case of Egypt, direct foreign imposition begins to look more like political proposition. By elevating a largely apolitical section of the population during the reign of the Mamlukes, Bonaparte further entrenched French position in Egyptian society. The *ulama* were not appointees of the Ottoman sultan, and the basis of their rule was Bonaparte and his troops. However, the

²⁷ Charles-roux, 175.

²⁸ Charles-roux, 175.

²⁹ Charles-roux, 175.

³⁰ Stuart J. Woolf, *Napoleon's integration of Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 186.

³¹ Woolf, 188.

degree to which a new class of rulers was established can be debated. Although, the French initially rejected any possibility of members of the old Mamluke order to play a role in the new government, the *ulama* insisted that the preservation of order among the general population was predicated on the presence of “Ottoman Egyptians”.³² Bonaparte’s policy in Egypt is, therefore, very much similar to his policies of assimilation and integration during the latter part of his reign. However, key concepts such as liberty still possessed a different meaning in the orient than in Europe. For Al-Jabarti, for example, “Their term ‘liberty’ means that they are not slaves like the Mamlukes.”³³ Collaboration is much more difficult to gauge and less likely to exist when such ideas were wholly alien to Egyptian intellectuals. The French perception of Egyptians as the ‘other’ is, thus, much more distinct when compared to their views of their European neighbours. The same political language, regardless of local opposition to it (as in Italy), simply did not exist in the non-European world. When these factors do not exist, then the use of imperialism as the means of reconfiguring the political order of the conquered nation for the sole purpose of elevating the imperial status of the conqueror, is applicable. In accordance with this line of thought, Hegel posited that “If a constitution were not in accord

with the spirit of the people on whom it was imposed, then it would be simply ‘external’ and therefore ‘meaningless and valueless’”³⁴ If we use ‘constitution’ to also include a form of government and its accompanying political ideas, then in the immediate moment, the General Divan that was established by the French had little meaning to the general population, or even to the intellectual elite. By entrusting power to selected clergymen and other notables, and justifying it by using the revolutionary language of legitimacy and sovereignty, the French attempted to create a firm basis for Egyptian support of French tutelage.

Such methods of imperial rule, however, should not only be delegated to the sphere of domestic politics. One historian, in writing about the Egyptian expedition, noted that “The very conception of the campaign constituted a remarkable first: an indirect approach on an intercontinental scale to solving a major strategic problem affecting national security.”³⁵ This policy, however, would continue beyond the French occupation of Egypt. In accordance with his efforts of

³² Cole, *Napoleon’s Egypt*. 75.

³³ *Al-Jabarti’s Chronicle*, 28.

³⁴ Colin Tyler, “Hegel, War and the Tragedy of Imperialism,” *History of European Ideas* 30 (December 2004): 426.

³⁵ Aryeh Schmuelevitz, “Napoleon and the French in Egypt and the Holy Land 1798-1801,” in *Napoleon and the French in Egypt and the Holy Land, 1789-1801: Articles Presented at the 2nd International Congress of Napoleonic Studies, Israel, July 4-11, 1999*, ed. Aryeh Shmuelevitz, Mordechai Gichon, J. David Markham, and David Mendelson (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2002), 13.

disrupting British commerce and at the same time winning the war against Russia, by appealing to the regional issues of non-European states, Napoleon hoped to gain global support for French imperial power and in effect augment that very power. Persia, faced with increasing British control along its eastern border, and the century old expansionist aims of Russia, provided a suitable ally for the Directory and eventually Napoleon. The diplomatic overtures to Persia seemed to cause much concern for the British as well. For one British diplomat “The Directory has for a long time employed agents in Persia and India; the rulers of Persia have promised to support the venture; Zaman Shah, the emir of Afghanistan and Kashmir has also committed himself; the Sultan of Mysore, and the troops he needed are to be put at his disposal.”³⁶ For Persia, however, the key issue that drew them to the French cause was the territorial integrity of their state and the regaining of lost territories from Russia. Utilizing such concerns, Talleyrand in a letter to the Persian court, wrote: “This campaign [Asia] must free from Russian domination Georgia and all the provinces of the Caspian Sea where they have penetrated. The honour and the interests of Persia depend on it. It should act with vigour. France will abandon it neither in war not in peacetime.”³⁷ To solidify this new relationship, the Treaty of Finkenstein was signed on 4 May 1807.³⁸

³⁶ Amini, 13.

³⁷ Amini, xviii-xix and 88.

³⁸ Amini, 102.

The alliance would give Napoleon another flank along the southern border of Russia and divert Russian troops away from the European theatre. It would also act as an extension of the continental system by disrupting British trade routes to India.³⁹ The pact, however, came to mean very little once the Treaty of Tilsit was signed with Russia on 7 July 1807.⁴⁰ What is most important here is not the success of the pact, but the use of non-European powers largely for European disputes. By guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Persia, Napoleon in effect established a relationship of imperial supervision over that country. This practice would indeed continue to the late 19th century and onward by other European states as well, most interestingly by Germany during the First World War through the policy of war by revolution as highlighted by Fritz Fisher in *Griff nach der Weltmacht*. Similar to this policy, some sources suggest that Bonaparte during his expedition to the Levant ensured the creation of a separate state for the Jewish population of the Ottoman Empire in return for their support.⁴¹ Once again territorial rights, this time for a small sect composed of a population with a common ethnic background, was utilized for imperial gains.

Although, as it was stated previously, the use of concepts such as

³⁹ Amini, 103.

⁴⁰ Amini, 103

⁴¹ Schmuelewitz, 17.

political legitimacy and sovereignty in the French revolutionary sense did not have an immediate impact for the general population, the ideas did influence future policies by non-European governments. One can cite the reign of Mehmed Ali to showcase the

permeation of these revolutionary concepts in Middle Eastern political thought.

Following the withdrawal of the remaining French forces in 1801, and a period of political turmoil, the governorship of the Egyptian province of the Ottoman Empire was entrusted to Mehmed Ali.⁴² Upon his ascendance, much of the intended reforms of Bonaparte were carried out. The

reorganization of the military, the centralization of administration and tax collection, the creation of secular schools, and state monopoly over key sectors such

as agriculture and commerce were fervently implemented during the reign of Mehmed Ali, often by French technicians who had not left with their countrymen.⁴³ Although, these reforms do show the desire of Mehmed Ali in leading his state along

the European path of progress, what is most indicative of the impact of Napoleon's revolutionary ideas are the way Mehmed Ali came to power and consolidated his position. By the spring of 1805, thousands of Egyptians, tired of the heavy taxation for the support of French and Ottoman troops, were led by the *ulama* and called for the removal of the newly appointed Ottoman governor of Egypt, Hurşid Pasha. In his place they called



for the appointment of Mehmed Ali.

Hurşid refused stating “I was appointed by the Sultan and will not be removed at the command of the peasants. I will leave the Citadel only on the orders of the imperial government.” Fighting between the two sides ensued in the streets, until a *firman* from the imperial government arrived stating: “To Mehmed Ali Pasha, former governor of Jidda and present

⁴² Seçil Kara Akgün, “The impact of the French Expedition to Egypt on Early 19th Century Ottoman Reforms,” in *Napoleon and the French in Egypt and the Holy Land, 1789-1801: Articles Presented at the 2nd International Congress of Napoleonic Studies, Israel, July 4-11, 1999*, ed. Aryeh Shmuelevitz, Mordechai Gichon, J. David Markham, and David Mendelson (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2002), 29.

⁴³ Akgün, 29-31.

governor of Egypt, since the 20th of Rabi’I (18 June 1805] when the *ulema* and subjects approved of that and of the deposing of Ahmed Pasha [Hurşid] from [the governorship] of Egypt.”⁴⁴ The very act of refusing an appointed governor of the Porte and for his replacement by an individual with popular approval is remarkable. More importantly, the Porte, recognizing the will of the people, was forced to accept the appointment of Mehmed Ali by the people. Indeed, Mehmed Ali’s rise to power was very unusual and did not sit well with officials in Istanbul. He was neither a *Sharif* who could claim descent from Prophet Mohammad, nor a *ghazi* who could claim power through military victory.⁴⁵ The concept of legitimacy, recognized as consent from the general population for a particular ruler, seemed to have been gaining ground in the Middle East. Moreover, what this shows is that despite the brief presence of French rule in Egypt, Bonaparte was relatively successful in detaching the Egyptian province away from Istanbul. The popular call for the appointment of Mehmed Ali as governor, Mehmed Ali’s acceptance of the people’s desire, and its undesired approval by the Porte, all signify the power that European political ideas had in establishing deep ties between western imperial powers and the non-European world.

⁴⁴ Khaled Fahmy, *Mehmed Ali: From Ottoman Governor to Ruler of Egypt* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009), 25-26.

⁴⁵ Fahmy, 28.

There remain, however, different interpretations of the nature of this relationship. While some historians, including those of Egyptian background, have highlighted a process of westernization both positively and negatively, others have described the relationship as one of ‘Creolization’.⁴⁶ For some Egyptian historians, the French expedition was nothing more than an imperialist invasion using ideas such as liberty as a cover for exploitation. More than a military campaign, the invasion was viewed as a “cultural attack” which utilized inventions such as the printing press as tools of imperial expansion.⁴⁷ Other Egyptian historians, however, while not denying the aggressive nature of the invasion, emphasized its positive consequences. According to a liberal writer named Louis ‘Awad, “There is no escape from considering Bonaparte’s Egyptian expedition of 1798, and the continuing links with Europe that developed in its wake, as the decisive factor which molded political and social ideas in their modern sense in Egypt.”⁴⁸ C.A. Bayly on the other hand has noted that the French Revolution was not seen as a force of liberation in the Middle East, but as a new

⁴⁶ Shamir, “The Bicentennial Debate” and Juan Cole, “Playing Muslim: Bonaparte’s Army of the Orient and Euro-Muslim Creolization,” in *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760-1840*, ed. David Armitage, Sanjay Subrahmanyam (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

⁴⁷ Shamir, 223-24.

⁴⁸ Shamir, 226-27.

crusade.⁴⁹ In all of these historical interpretations, the theme of French imperial expansion, whether positive or negative, is present. An interesting outlook into the period, however, is provided by Juan Cole. For him, the process of cultural interaction could be seen as “selective creolization” in which contact between these two peoples did not produce a third distinctive culture, but involved a process of mediation and compromise between two sets of norms and values to find a functional centre between the two societies.⁵⁰ If one takes into account this interpretation, then we can see recognition by the French of the importance of mixing French and Egyptian cultural traditions in order to gain popular support for French rule. Although Michael Broers’ concepts of “integration” as “the incorporation of foreign elements into an indigenous system,” and acculturation—in which the cultural traits of another group were adopted—are intended for the Napoleonic Empire, they are equally applicable to Bonaparte’s policies in Egypt.⁵¹ Thus, the process of establishing revolutionary concepts in the political culture of Egypt was not simply one of direct imposition, it was contingent on the ability of the French to present themselves as adopting Egyptian customs and practices as well. Before diving into this aspect of

Bonaparte’s policies, it should be noted that there already existed a certain affinity in French society for oriental culture. Works such as Montesquieu’s *Persian Letters* and Volney’s *Les Ruines* had popularized images of the East in French imagination.⁵²

Bonaparte, however, went much farther in trying to reconcile Egyptian and French cultures. The images of Bonaparte wearing a turban and promoting the participation of French troops in Egyptian celebrations have been well documented.⁵³ The reverse has also been observed, with the construction of a 70 feet pyramid glorifying the French Revolution through Egyptian symbols, as well as instructing the wearing of the cockade by Egyptians and their participation in celebrations of the French Revolution.⁵⁴ For Juan Cole, the fact that the French could actually believe in the desire of Egyptians in joining these festivities showed that they did not consider the expedition as one of colonization.⁵⁵ The French Revolution had opened up new avenues for cooperation,

⁴⁹ Cole, “Playing Muslim,” 126.

⁵⁰ Cole, “Playing Muslim,” 141.

⁵¹ Michael Broers, “Napoleon, Charlemagne, and Lotharingia: Acculturation and the Boundaries of Napoleonic Europe,” *The Historical Journal* 44 (2001): 142.

⁵² Edward James Kolla, “Not So Criminal: New Understandings of Napoleon’s Foreign Policy in the East,” *French Historical Studies* 30 (2007): 178.

⁵³ May Kathryn Cooney, “Egypt Was Worth a Turban: Bonaparte’s Flirtation with Islam,” in *Napoleon and the French in Egypt and the Holy Land, 1789-1801 : Articles Presented at the 2nd International Congress of Napoleonic Studies, Israel, July 4-11, 1999*, ed. Aryeh Shmuelevitz, Mordechai Gichon, J. David Markham, and David Mendelson (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2002), 88.

⁵⁴ Cooney, 93-94 and Cole, *Napoleon’s Egypt*, 174-75.

⁵⁵ Cole, *Napoleon’s Egypt*, 174-75.

and the process of cultural transference was not simply one sided. Thus, perhaps it was not as much a blind assumption of possible cultural unity as Cole depicts, as it was a recognition by Bonaparte that the French Revolution enabled a new methods of gaining support in conquered territories. By showing that the French were not simply conquerors trying to impose their ideas on the native population, Bonaparte believed that he could more easily integrate French revolutionary ideas into Egyptian society. By doing so, he would create a state whose political culture was “compatible” with France;⁵⁶ which further ensured French rule in the land of the Nile. Therefore, to say that there now existed an avenue for the transference of values is not to suggest that the French viewed Egyptian culture as equal to their own. Like the case of Italy, the French viewed Egyptian culture as having eroded over the millennia and dispossessed of its past grandeur. It was now up to the French to restore that glory through “liberty and modernity”.⁵⁷

That the French were relatively successful in disseminating revolutionary ideas is seen in how eastern empires such as the Ottomans utilized these ideas in similar fashion. Although, what C.A. Bayly refers to as “Para-colonial” powers such as Mehmed Ali’s Egypt or Qajar Iran were not revolutionary themselves, they

did utilize revolutionary concepts such as legitimacy.⁵⁸ In the case of the Ottoman Empire, the Porte resorted to similar oriental concepts of elevating backward cultures and regions on the periphery to the progressive standards of the metropole on its own empire.⁵⁹ Ussama Makdisi, in his analysis of the Ottoman Empire, contends that the Ottomans while resisting western representation of a backward Ottoman east, “engaged with” and came to accept these representations.⁶⁰ Europe was then viewed as the embodiment of progress and modernity.⁶¹ Thus, in this analysis, it seems that one cannot discount the willingness of eastern states in adopting revolutionary ideas and oriental representations and utilizing them, without necessarily reinterpreting them, to meet the needs of their own empire. However, Ottoman Orientalism was as much a form of resisting western imperialism because it perceived the process of modernizing its backward provinces, mostly composed of Arabs, as emanating from Istanbul and the Turkish population rather than the west. Thus, the process of Ottomanizing (modernizing) the backward periphery of the empire had its own temporal logic, and was separate from

⁵⁶ Howard G. Brown, “Napoleon Bonaparte, Political Prodigy,” *History Compass* 5 (2007): 1391.

⁵⁷ Cole, *Napoleon’s Egypt*. 29.

⁵⁸ C.A. Bayly, “The Age of Revolutions in Global Context: An Afterword,” in *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760-1840*, edited by, David Armitage, Sanjay Subrahmanyam (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 211.

⁵⁹ Makdisi, 768.

⁶⁰ Makdisi, 768

⁶¹ Makdisi, 769.

western imperial ambitions.⁶²

Furthermore, the Ottomans turned to Islam as a point of divide between European decadence and eastern purity. Upon his arrival to Damascus in the second half of the nineteenth century, an Ottoman official lamented the people's adoption of European style and customs. He saw "a sad spectacle of degeneracy of taste among the peoples of the Orient." He suggested that "While there is still time, I advise architects and artists who love beautiful things to hasten to Damascus to admire what is left of the Islamic art."⁶³ The glory of Islam of the past was contrasted with the decadence of the present. Thus, the Ottomans saw themselves as restoring the glory of the past by Ottomanizing the backward periphery. For Makdisi, the Porte "de-Orientalized the empire, by Orientalizing it."⁶⁴ The task of modernization was, therefore, seen as justification for Ottoman imperial rule. The east, particularly the Ottoman Empire and Mehmed Ali's Egypt came to recognize the utility of French revolutionary ideas of legitimacy, and modernity for their own imperial and territorial ambitions.

The French expedition to Egypt in 1798 did, indeed, introduce western political concepts to Middle Eastern political thought that has existed to this day. However, the purpose of this essay

was to highlight how these concepts were utilized by the French to establish imperial rule over conquered territories, particularly in Egypt. In attempting to consolidate their rule in Egypt, Bonaparte depicted the previous governors as foreigners who had desecrated their land, and the French as the restorers of that past glory. Juan Cole states that Bonaparte "was pioneering a form of imperialism that deployed Liberal rhetoric and institutions for the extraction of resources and geopolitical advantage."⁶⁵ However, these concepts were more than just a cover for bare exploitation. They were the only means of garnering acceptance of French rule from the native population. Although, French presence in Egypt was brief, revolutionary ideas of legitimacy, sovereignty, modernity and territorial integrity found a receptive audience. The successful penetration of these revolutionary concepts is made apparent by their utilization in the policies of Mehmed Ali and the Porte in their effort to solidify and justify their own territorial and imperial rule.

⁶² Makdisi, 771-72 and 785.

⁶³ Makdisi, 785.

⁶⁴ Makdisi, 773.

⁶⁵ Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt*, 247.

A VIEW FROM THE SADDLE: USING GOOGLE EARTH® TO INTERPRET NAPOLEONIC SITES

by Edna L. Markham

Introduction

We often need to remind ourselves that we need to judge people, policies and events in their historical context, not using the morals and standards of today. Likewise, places such as a battlefield need to be put in their geographic context to aid in the interpretation as to why a battle occurred as it did. This paper will describe the use of satellite imagery, elevation data and terrain analysis to bring historical sites and maps from a flat two dimensions into a more realistic three dimensions. Napoleon, himself, was interested in acquiring a three dimensional terrain model of Central Switzerland.²²⁹

The recent development of geographic web browsers, also known as geoportals, has made access to satellite imagery and elevation data within reach of the general public. Google Earth®²³⁰ is the best known example of a web-based program that drapes satellite imagery and other geographic information (roads, sites

of interest, etc.) upon high resolution terrain. Microsoft's Visual Earth²³¹ is also a geoportal with similar features. In addition, there are many federal web sites, which contain more information about a specific country. Two federal sites used were France's Géoportail from the Institut Géographique National²³² and Italy's Portale Cartografico Nazionale.²³³

Google Earth® has many uses beyond just looking at the earth. Information about a particular site may be downloaded or uploaded to the rest of the online community. Different types of maps may be draped upon the terrain, rather than just the Google Earth® satellite image. These maps may be current road maps, historical maps, or thematic maps. Thematic maps describe a geographic distribution of some type of characteristic such as elevation, population density, economic output, geology, etc. Photos can be overlain in Google Earth®. Three

²²⁹ JA Niederoest, "Bird's Eye View on Switzerland in the 18th Century: 3D Recording and Analysis of a Historical Relief Model," *The International Archives of Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Sciences*, Volume XXXIV-5/C15, ISSN 1682-1750, S. 589-94.

²³⁰ Google Earth® (<http://earth.google.com/>) - (accessed 2015).

²³¹ Microsoft Virtual Earth 3D (Beta), now known as Bing Maps (<http://www.microsoft.com/maps/>) - (accessed 2015).

²³² IGN – Institut Géographique National (<http://www.ign.fr/>) (accessed 2015).

²³³ Il Portale Cartografico Nazionale (<http://www.pcn.minambiente.it/PCN/>) (accessed 2015).

dimensional models of buildings can be created in Google SketchUp®²³⁴ and be uploaded to Google Earth® to their proper geographic location.

Sight Seeing with Google Earth®

The most common use of Google Earth® is “sight-seeing”—simply because one can see things from the air that are not readily apparent from the ground. For example, there is an interesting feature near Brienne-le-Château, the village where a young Napoleon Bonaparte went to military school. Northwest of the village there is a wooded area in which the trees have been felled in a particular pattern, Napoleon’s bicorne hat (Figure 1). There is no mention of this feature on the Brienne-le-Château website.²³⁵ It may not even be open to the public. It is a feature that, from the ground, would be almost unrecognizable for what it is.

One is not limited to examining the satellite imagery in the traditional plan or map view in which one looks straight down onto the surface. Most geoportals have a 3D capability so that the imagery and terrain may be viewed from any height or angle. The view may even be from the ground surface to give a “you had to be there” point of view.

²³⁴ Google SketchUp® 7 (<http://sketchup.google.com/>) (accessed 2015).

²³⁵ Village of Brienne-le-Château (<http://www.ville-brienne-le-chateau.fr/>) (accessed 2015).

Aerial Archaeology

An offshoot of “sight-seeing” is to examine the ground for signs of previous habitation. The problem with sites such as battlefields is that they tended to be occupied for only a few days. Very little evidence of the battle remains unless it is in the form of earthworks such as fortresses, redoubts, or even cemeteries.



Figure 1. Napoleon's bicorne in the forest near Brienne-le-Château.

While examining the image of the Brienne-le-Château, some dark linear marks in the soil were apparent (Figure 2). These features are known as “soil marks” and are the remnants of ditches that have been ploughed over and filled in over the years. When a ditch is filled in, the density of the fill is slightly less than the original material. Also the fill material may be compositionally different from the original fill and would retain moisture differently. Thus, at certain times of the year, when the fields have been newly ploughed or harvested and certain weather conditions, the soil of the ancient ditch is darker than the surrounding soils. Conversely, the soil

above a buried wall would dry out quicker than the surrounding soil and appears as lighter features, known as “parch-marks.” During the summer months as the crops or grasses are growing, “soil-marks” or “parch-marks” may be less obvious. Archaeological features may appear as differences in crop height or density known as “crop marks.” This is due to the abundance of moisture over filled ditches and the drier conditions over buried walls that affect crop growth.

The archives of the Department of Aube (Les Archives Départementales de l’Aube) at have uploaded cadastral maps, created by decree of Napoleon in 1807.²³⁶ The cadastral maps show the boundaries and ownership of properties (Figure 3). The maps from Brienne-le-Château were created in 1811. The “soil marks” are the result of smaller fields that were consolidated into larger properties. It was likely that these smaller fields from 1811 were separated from neighboring



Figure 2. "Soil marks" near Brienne-le-Château.

Originally, I believed that these “soil marks” were created during a Roman settlement between the 1st to 3rd centuries as a ditch/hill earthworks or enclosures around fields, pastures, settlements, villas, etc. Further investigation has revealed that they are much younger than that.

properties by tree lines or hedgerows. When the fields were combined, this vegetation was removed, including most of the roots as to not impede ploughing. The resultant ditch was filled with surrounding

²³⁶ Cadastre napoléonien (<http://www.archives-aube.fr/s/4/cadastre-napoleonien/?>) (accessed 2015).



Figure 3. A close-up of highlighted "Soil marks" (left) and highlighted boundaries from the 1811 cadastral map of Brienne-le-Château (right).

soil and seen under certain moisture conditions as "soil marks."

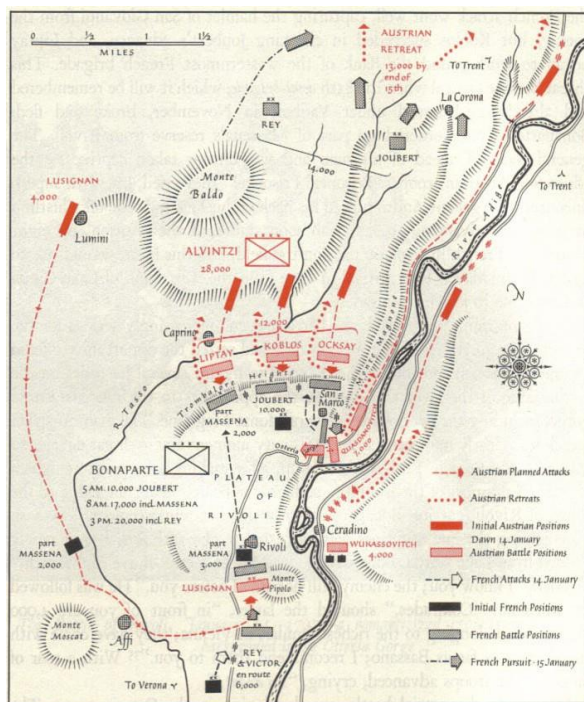


Figure 4. Map of the Battle of Rivoli from David Chandler's *The Campaigns of Napoleon*.

Battlefield and Historical Maps

Any type of map may be imported as a layer with Google Earth® that is in a

raster image format such as a JPG, TIF, PNG or GIF. If the map or image has not been previously georeferenced, it can be resized and rotated within Google Earth® so that it is in the correct scale and geographic location. Typical battlefield maneuver maps (Figure 4)²³⁷ try to show much information in one image such as where the different units are at different times and the nature of the terrain. The terrain is represented by hachures, but does not give a clear indication of the magnitude of the elevation or differences in slopes. Simply draping the map upon the terrain can make the battlefield map much clearer (Figure 5).

There are many historical maps that are already georeferenced. The David Rumsey Historical Map Collection²³⁸ is a website with thousands of historical maps

²³⁷ David G. Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1966).

²³⁸ David Rumsey Map Collection (<http://www.davidrumsey.com/>) (accessed 2015).



Figure 5. The same map of the Battle of Rivoli draped upon terrain in Google Earth®.

from around the world dating from 1690 to the present, but mainly of the 18th and 19th centuries. Google Earth® can create a network link to the website and the map may be draped upon the terrain. The maps may also be downloaded from the website and viewed offline with the use of a free viewer program. The maps are all georeferenced so that they will import automatically into any other GIS (Geographic Information System) software program.

The Cassini map of France was of particular interest. This map was commissioned by Louis XV in 1747 to the Cassini family of cartographers. The third and fourth generations of the Cassini family worked on this map which consisted of 180 map sheets at a scale of 1:86,400. The maps were only published post-revolution between 1798 and 1812. It is a fascinating map to just wander about in, not just to see what is different, but also what has remained the same over the past two hundred years. For example, the

wooded areas around Brienne-le-Château have remained virtually unchanged.

The Battle of Rivoli

The main focus of the paper is to use features in Google Earth® and MicroDEM to analysis the terrain at the Battle of Rivoli. The Battle of Rivoli was fought on 14-15 January 1797 at the end of the First Italian Campaign. The battle itself has been written about elsewhere and it does not have to be repeated here. There were only a few highly detailed accounts easily available. They included Martin Boycott-Brown's *The Road to Rivoli*,²³⁹ an article by John Giessmann in the magazine "Napoleon,"²⁴⁰ and a description of the Battle of Rivoli from a historical and genealogy website of the French military.²⁴¹

Important terrain related aspects of the battle to note are:

1. General Joubert's withdrawal from La Corona to the plateau of Rivoli during the night of January 13th, 1797 along the ridge of Mt. Magnon.

²³⁹ Martin Boycott-Brown, *The Road to Rivoli: Napoleon's First Campaign* (New York: Cassell & Company, 2001).

²⁴⁰ John Giessmann, "One Final Victory: Rivoli," *Napoleon: His Life, His Wars, His World* 7 (February 1997), 36-43, and 55.

²⁴¹ Rivoli_la_favorite_14-16_janvier_1797.pdf (<http://www.genemilassoc.fr>) (accessed 2010).

2. Austrian General Alvinczy's strategy to divide his forces into six separate columns. Column 1 would travel south between Lake Garda and Mt. Baldo. Its objective would be to circle behind the French forces to cut off their route of retreat to the south. Columns 2, 3 and 4 would travel south along parallel routes between Mt. Baldo and Mt. Magnon. Columns 5 and 6 marched south through the Adige valley. There are only two roads down the Adige Valley. The road on the right bank was not much more than a trail and suitable only for infantry.²⁴² The road on the left bank was much better and was used to transport all the cavalry and artillery. Due to the terrain and quality of the roads, none of the other columns had cavalry or artillery, only a few mountain guns.
3. The Adige Valley narrows and its constraining mountains become steeper, the further south one travels. The only route from the Adige Valley onto the plains is through the narrow Osteria Gorge onto the plateau of Rivoli. Due to the narrowness of the Osteria Gorge and existing defensive earthworks, Napoleon was able to allocate a mere 1000 men to hold off the over

8000 men advancing through the gorge.²⁴³

4. When Napoleon arrived at Rivoli at 2 am of the morning of the 14 January 1797, he immediately ordered his troops to take the series of semi-circular hills on the north side of the plateau. These hills are glacial moraines. They are the debris and sediments left behind by glaciers that advanced down the Adige Valley during the last ice age. These hills were natural defensive positions, like ramparts, with steep front slopes and gentler rear slopes.

Terrain Analysis

Higher resolution terrain data of the Rivoli area was downloaded from the Viewfinders Panoramas' website²⁴⁴ with a resolution of 30 m. The resolution of the terrain used in Google Earth® for this area is only 90 m. This battle was fought in the winter and despite the warm climate of Italy, snow is an important factor in the mountains. Some of the Austrian columns that marched along the slopes of Mt. Baldo did so on icy trails and newly fallen snow.²⁴⁵ If one considers the presence of snow to only be a factor of altitude, then a snow line at 1700 m would cover many of the mountain peaks, including Mt. Baldo,

²⁴² Boycott-Brown, 493.

²⁴³ Boycott-Brown, 506.

²⁴⁴ Viewfinder Panoramas (<http://www.viewfinderpanoramas.org/>) (accessed 2015).

²⁴⁵ Boycott-Brown, 496.

with snow (Figure 6). This is not the snow brought by storms, but the snow that is always present due to the low temperatures at high altitudes. This image has been colored so that the lake level of Lake Garda is colored blue; the lower elevations are green for vegetation; higher elevations are red to represent bare rock. Any elevations above 1700 m are colored white for snow. If the snow line is lowered to 1500 m (Figure 7) then snow starts to fill some of the mountain passes and would hamper troops marching through those passes.

Another term for the ease of movement of troops is *trafficability* which is only a factor of the slope of the terrain and is defined by three categories colored like a traffic light. If the slope is between 1° and 30°, troops have little difficulty moving over the terrain and is colored

green. If the slope is between 30° and 45°, the terrain is still passable, but more difficult and slow, colored yellow. If the slope is greater than 45°, the terrain is considered impassable and colored red. As shown in Figure 8, the French troops in the semi-circular plateau occupy a green area, thus easy for them move about the plateau. Travel down the Adige Valley for the Austrian columns 5 and 6 was also easy. The other Austrian columns had a more difficult march. Much of the terrain slopes are in the slow and impassable categories. These troops must have been exhausted with their multi-day march before they even reached the battlefield.

Line of Sight Analysis

A line of sight calculation describes the field of view that is visible from specific location. Joubert's withdrawal

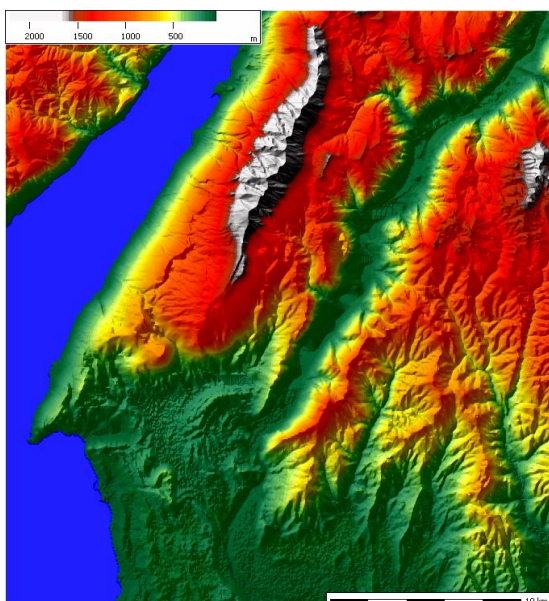


Figure 6. Rivoli area with a snow line at 1700 m.

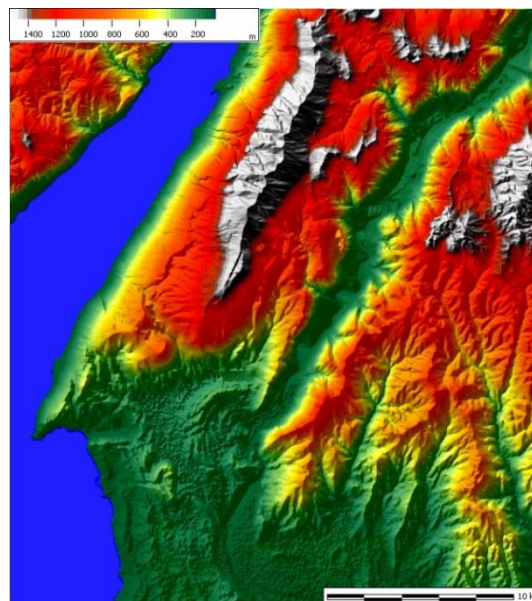


Figure 7. Rivoli area with a snow line at 1500 m.

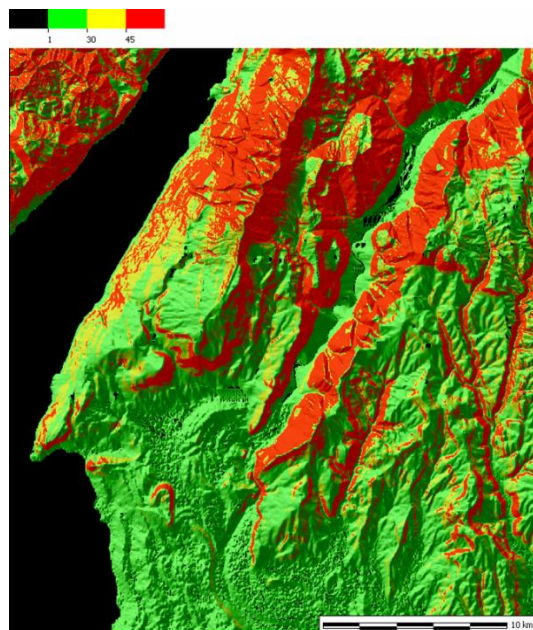


Figure 8. Trafficability or ease of movement map of the Rivoli area.

along the ridge of Mt. Magnon gave him the advantage of being able to keep two important sites within his field of view (Figure 9). The area colored green is the line of sight along his route. The Austrian

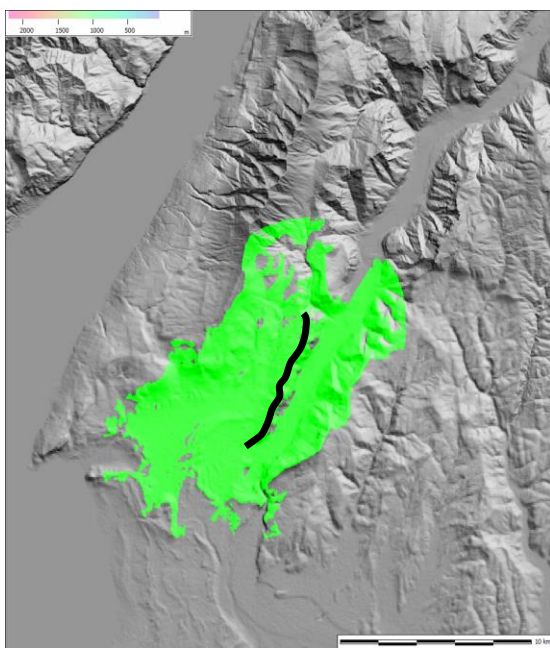


Figure 9. Field of view along Joubert's path (black line) along the ridge of Mt. Magnon.

columns 2, 3, and 4 were visible marching between Mt. Magnon and Mt. Baldo. It also gave him first-hand knowledge of the troop movements within the Adige Valley. The number of troops he saw convinced him that this was the main attack force, not merely a diversion. If he had taken the route in the valley between Mt. Magnon and Mt. Baldo (Figure 10), his view of Adige Valley would have been delayed till he had reached the plateau of Rivoli. Precious hours would have been lost before he could inform Napoleon.

Battle of Rivoli Animation

An animation of the above battle was created using the historical imagery feature within Google Earth® (Figure 11). This type of animation has been done before, from the War of 1812 to the Battle

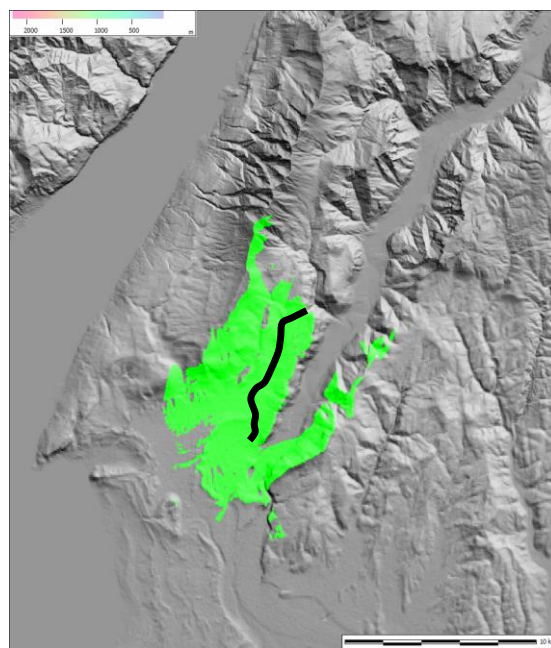


Figure 10. Field of view along path (black line) in the valley between Mt. Magnon and Mt. Baldo.

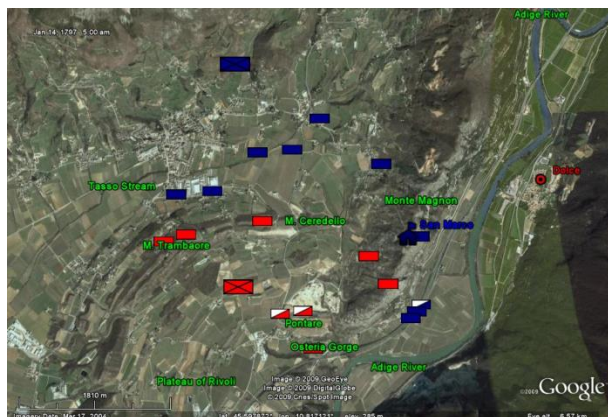


Figure 11. A frame from the Battle of Rivoli animation.

of the Bulge.²⁴⁶ From the detailed descriptions of the Battle of Rivoli, the time and location of each Austrian column and French demi-brigade was noted. There were some discrepancies between some of the sources of which French demi-brigade was where and when, so only a general account of the battle was created describing the movements of the French Left, Centre and Right units, rather than each demi-brigade. Animations within Google Earth® are created from scripts written in Keyhole Markup Language, i.e., kml scripts. These are ASCII text files that have a similar format to html scripts used for web pages. An excellent introduction to creating kml scripts is “The KML Handbook”²⁴⁷ and online tutorials.²⁴⁸ Google Earth® also uses a compressed

script format known as kmz. A compression program such as WinZip can uncompress the kmz file to a readable and editable kml format.

Below is an example of three steps in the animation script for a single French Infantry unit:

```
<Placemark>
<TimeSpan>
<begin>1797-01-14T05:00:00Z</begin>
<end>1797-01-14T06:00:00Z</end>
</TimeSpan>
<styleUrl>#french</styleUrl>
<Point>
<coordinates>10.794668,45.595003,0</coordinates>
</Point>
</Placemark>
<Placemark>
<TimeSpan>
<begin>1797-01-14T06:00:00Z</begin>
<end>1797-01-14T08:00:00Z</end>
</TimeSpan>
<styleUrl>#french</styleUrl>
<Point>
<coordinates>10.795260,45.598307,0</coordinates>
</Point>
</Placemark>
<Placemark>
<TimeSpan>
<begin>1797-01-14T08:00:00Z</begin>
<end>1797-01-14T09:00:00Z</end>
</TimeSpan>
<styleUrl>#french</styleUrl>
<Point>
<coordinates>10.795878,45.594637,0</coordinates>
</Point>
</Placemark>
```

It may look complicated initially, but most of the text between the <Placemark> and </Placemark> is repeated. Each frame of the animation is defined by “when,” “what” and “where.” The <TimeSpan> defines the beginning and end times of when the icon will

²⁴⁶ US Naval Academy SO432 Final Projects (http://www.usna.edu/Users/oceano/pguth/website/so432web/projects/So432_final_projects.htm) (accessed 2015).

²⁴⁷ Josie Wernecke, *The KML Handbook: Geographic Visualization for the Web* (Addison-Wesley, 2009).

²⁴⁸ What is kml? (<http://code.google.com/apis/kml/>) (accessed 2015).

appear, as shown by the red text. The `<styleUrl>` (green text) defines which icon will appear. The image file and size of the icon is defined elsewhere in the kml script. In this case, the icon representing the French infantry does not change with time. Lastly, the `<coordinates>` (blue text) defines the longitude, latitude and elevation locations of the icon. An animation can be created, in the manner of a flip-book, by adding subsequent times and locations. A smoother animation may be achieved by using shorter time spans and intermediate locations.

Once all the French and Austrian movements are entered into then kml files, the animation may be played, but not just in the traditional overhead map view. It may be viewed from various angles and elevations. The animation may be played upon a historical map or other thematic maps.

Analysis of Time and Location

The software program MicroDEM can be used to analyse time-based events as well as terrain. Las Cases' *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*²⁴⁹ relates Napoleon's own account of the Battle of Rivoli when he arrived at 2:00 am on the morning of January 14, 1797:

Bataille de Rivoli – Le temps
s'était éclairci, il faisait un clair de

²⁴⁹ Emmanuel de *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* (Paris: Éditions de Seuil, 1968).

lune superbe. Napoléon monta sur différentes hauteurs et observa les diverses lignes des feus ennemis.²⁵⁰

Using the software program MicroDEM and the time and location of Rivoli, the moon rise and set times can be calculated with the following results:

Moonrise = 18:20 pm (13 January)
and Moonset = 8:43 am (14 January)

Indeed, the full moon occurred the evening before, on 13 January 1797. Since the date is only a few weeks past the winter solstice, the moon is also very high in the sky, an azimuth of approximately 65°. Thus, Napoleon's memory was correct that the whole battlefield would have been illuminated by a high bright moon. It is also important to note sunrise and sunset times:

Sunrise = 7:21 am and Sunset =
16:26 pm

It is winter and the daylight hours are short. Some of the attacks initiated by Napoleon and Joubert on the mornings of 14 and 15 January were begun at 5 am, well before dawn.

Conclusions

Google Earth®, other geoportals, and terrain analysis software can provide the historian tools to present, educate and analyze the geography related to historical

²⁵⁰ Las Cases, 599.

events. The software is free and easy to use. Analysis of the terrain can develop a “*coup d’oeil*,” i.e., why is one route better than another, where are the good defensive

positions? The comparison of modern and historical maps demonstrates how much of the landscape has remained unchanged after 200 years.

PLUCKING THE SHAMROCK OF EUROPE: LESSONS FROM IRISH REVOLUTION AND UNION

by Nicholas Stark

The struggle of the “French Revolutionary Wars” is, at its base, often stereotypically viewed as a cataclysmic struggle between anarchic revolutionary France and the rock of moderation and liberalism that was England. As fascinating as the revolution in France is, this single-lens view often blinds one to the very real presence of not only discontent, but outright sedition and even revolution in France's opponents, including within Great Britain. What follows is an examination of the United Irishmen, the most substantial manifestation of revolution in the British Empire in this period, who organized a national struggle against British rule culminating in a mass uprising in 1798, and their connections with their ally, the French Republic. More importantly, it is an analysis of the failures of the Irish revolutionaries and the insights and lessons into international revolutionary movements to be gained from their faults in terms of ideology, organization, and praxis. The emphasis here is on the broadening of the geographic scope of the Irish revolutionaries, in contrast with a historiography steeped in local conflicts and peculiarities, in an effort to grapple with larger laws and processes of historical development.

While the United Irishmen began

as an open social group, primarily discussing Catholic Emancipation and the dissolution of the Penal Laws and other restrictions, the British government quickly censored it and drove it underground as a treasonous and seditious organization in the face of outbreak of war with France in 1793, due to its pro-French leanings. As British Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger summarized his counter-revolutionary crusade, “We were necessitated to resist French crimes by opposing to them French principles,” such as constitutionalism and universal suffrage.¹ The repression in Ireland, especially 1793-94, included the suppression of the paramilitary Irish Volunteers, creating a public uproar as the dismantling of the people's defense, the suspension of *Habeas Corpus Act*, and the passing of the “Gagging Acts,” formally titled *The Treasonable and Seditious Practices* and the *Seditious Meetings Acts*.²

¹ As quoted in Tom Holmberg, “Debate in Parliament on the Suspension of Habeas Corpus,” *Great Britain: Suspension of Habeas Corpus, 7 May 1794*,” Napoleon Series, online, http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/british/c_habeus.html (accessed 21 March 2013).

² The Irish Volunteers were a primarily Protestant militia raised around the American War of Independence to protect against French and Spanish invasion in the absence of British troops.

These outlawed written and spoken dissent or complaints of Government and the Constitution as well as the gathering of over fifty people without consent from magistrates. None of these acts, however, would result in nearly as much turmoil as the *Gunpowder Act*, allowing authorities to crack down on areas where they believed locals were storing arms, and the *Militia Act*, enacting partial conscription. Coupled with the unwillingness of Irish Parliament to either grant Catholics further rights or offer any opposition to these new oppressive acts, popular discontent flared in Ireland, as well as in Great Britain, and the people began looking towards various societies and political parties for extra-parliamentary solutions, primarily the now-radicalized United Irishmen.

In 1793-94, little was achieved in the form of Franco-Irish relations. While some leading members of the United Irishmen, such as Theobald Wolfe Tone, Napper Tandy, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, favored a militarized union with France in the struggle for an Irish republic, the United Irish executive remain undecided on the matter. What pressed the issue was the Jackson Affair. The Committee of Public Safety in France sent a pro-revolutionary Irish Anglican cleric then living in Paris, Reverend William Jackson, to Ireland in early 1794

The suppression of the Volunteers signaled the reduction of Ireland to a state of complete reliance on the British military for its protection.

to negotiate with the United Irishmen for an alliance. The United Irish, long accustomed to the operations of secret societies and wary of intrigue and English spies, distrusted Jackson as a potential enemy agent, but he was saved by Hamilton Rowan, who vouched for him. Tone drew up a memorandum on the state of Ireland for him, but unfortunately, while Jackson himself was not a British spy, his traveling companions were, and they betrayed both him and the United Irish leadership. The British government cracked down on the movement, Jackson was executed, and the leaders fled, Tone seeking exile in United States, from where he would continue negotiations with French representatives.

In terms of the structure and means of communication, the remaining United Irishmen were reformed forthwith as a militarily organized secret society. Members were supposed to represent every religious variation within Ireland, whether Catholic, Dissenter, or Anglican Protestant [generally referred to as just “Protestant”]. Potential members were to be proposed by a pre-existing member and had to be seconded, after which their admittance would be voted on during the next meeting. On the lowest level, the members composed local neighborhood-level “societies” of up to twelve members. The members would be bound by an oath of allegiance known as a “test,” but since the swearing of oaths was a capital crime

in the midst of government repression, the induction of new members would be done at a separate meeting location in front of only the inductee and those who both initiated and seconded the perspective's application. Part of the organizational program of the society as a whole pertained explicitly to the secrecy and censorship of the body: "8th. No communication relating to the business of the institution shall be made to any United Irishman on any pretense whatever, except in his own society or committee, or by some member of his own society or committee."³

Above the local "society," if there were four or more societies in a barony, then there would be a secretarial Baronial Committee, and a likewise number of Baronial Committees in a county in order for the existence of County Committees. Continuing upwards, in the presence of at least two County Committees, they would elect Provisional Committees, and a likewise number would elect a National Committee. In the end, each committee would be elected by the members of the committee directly beneath it, and by design only those who voted for their above committee men ("men" being their word, not the author's) would know the names of those composing the committees,

³ The United Irishmen, "The Organization of the United Irishmen, 1797" in Edmond Curtis and R.B. McDowell, eds., *Irish Historical Documents 1172-1922* (1943; repr., New York: 1968), 238-242.

for added secrecy.⁴ In terms of support bases, the largest urban centers of the realm, both Dublin and Belfast, were notably republican in terms of popular opinion, despite being the hosts of British administration. Indeed, while modern Belfast has a reputation for "loyalism," that was a largely late nineteenth/early twentieth-century development. In fact, the first Society of United Irishmen was founded in Belfast, with a sister society springing up soon after in Dublin. However, while the northern regions were the best organized, support for the United Irishmen was largely ubiquitous. Furthermore, while the overwhelming percentage of the population spoke Irish Gaelic, the majority of United Irish and other propaganda, such as the works of Thomas Paine, were published in English throughout Ireland. Nevertheless, the writings managed to reach a wide audience, through schools, churches, and other social organs. These propaganda centers would be the same cities as the United Irish headquarters and the overall most populous cities of Ireland: Dublin, Belfast, and Cork.⁵

While the United Irishmen were organizing all across their island nation, their foreign affairs essentially became embodied in one man: the aforementioned Theobald Wolfe Tone. Working with

⁴ The United Irishmen, "Organization," 238-242.

⁵ Richard Hayes, *Ireland and Irishmen in the French Revolution* (London: 1932), 8.

Pierre Adet, the French minister in Philadelphia, Tone was given passage out of exile and to France with a letter of introduction to the French government. In fact, the letter of introduction was addressed to the Committee of Public Safety, but by the time of his arrival in Paris in February 1796, not only had the Committee been decommissioned, but indeed the very National Convention had voted itself out of existence, transitioning into the Directory.⁶ He would quickly become the Directory's main informant on Irish policy and affairs.

Tone now faced the task of convincing the French government, firmly committed to a war in the east against Austria and spreading into the northern Italian states, of pursuing foreign revolution. Moreover, the effort would require a naval expedition, despite the British blockade of French ports, across that historical death trap for invading armies known as the English Channel. This was no minor task. For that reason, however, Tone primarily emphasized the benefits of Irish independence in utilitarian and military terms in juxtaposition with the war against England. As he wrote in his first memorial

on the state of Ireland for the Directory, “[It is] incumbent not merely on France but on all of Europe to endeavor to reduce her [England] within due limits and to prevent that enormous accumulation of wealth which the undisturbed possession of the commerce of the whole world would give her; and this reduction of her power can be alone, as I presume, accomplished with certainty and effect by separating Ireland from Great Britain.”⁷ In addition, he promised that upon the landing of a substantial number of French troops in Ireland and the establishment of a national Irish government, which would necessarily be a republic, Ireland would pass a treaty of alliance with France, only seek a joint peace, and serve as a staging ground for further operations against England if need be.

Nevertheless, the French were hesitant on the issue. Some in the Directory loved the idea of an invasion of the “British isles.” For instance, both the renowned General Lazare Hoche, pacifier of the Vendée, and one of the Directors himself, Lazare Carnot, head of the war ministry, were most interested in the notion, but there were further complications. There was an internal bureaucratic dispute between the foreign ministry, under Nicolas Madgett, and the head of the topographical and

⁶ “Pierre Auguste Adet to the Committee of Public Safety, 1 October 1795” in Theobald Wolfe Tone, *The Writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone, 1763-98*, edited by T.W. Moody, R.B. McDowell, and C.J. Woods, vol. II: *America, France and Bantry Bay, August 1795 to December 1796* (Oxford: 2001), 23-24.

⁷ “First Memorial to the French Government on the Present State of Ireland, 22 February 1796” in Tone, *Writings*, vol. II, 62.

geographical cabinet of the war ministry, Henri Clarke. It is also worth noting that both of these fellows were to an extent Irish themselves, Madgett being born in County Cork and Clarke being of noble Irish ancestry prior to the Stuart emigration of the late-seventeenth century. The debate, however, was less about substance and more a matter of conflicting claims of authority, both parties claiming to be the rightful handler of such affairs. Into this mess, add in a treasury that was constitutionally independent under the Directory and which was under predominantly royalist persuasion and opposed to funding actions against England. To top it off, Carnot added a further controversial idea to the plans for an Irish campaign: the “Chouannization” of Ireland. The idea was to reproduce in Ireland the conditions of the horrific civil war in the Vendée to inflict the same fate on England as England had supported in France, further bogging down British resources and manpower. However, Tone, and indeed much of the French government, opposed this scheme. What the French ultimately settled on was the altering of the aim of this scheme from Ireland to Great Britain, involving a small side mission to be timed simultaneously with the invasion of Ireland.

While the negotiations were underway, the program of the United Irishmen could be summarized as follows:

1. The establishment of an independent Irish Republic encompassing the entire island nation,
2. Opposition to the class of aristocrats, both Irish and British as well as internationally,
3. The enactment of Catholic Emancipation,
4. The introduction of universal adult male suffrage and democratic principles,
5. The enshrinement of the rights of man and citizen, indisputably foremost among them the sanctity of private property and freedom of religion.

The new state was to be all-religious inclusive, or in practical terms it would be non-denominational Christian.⁸ Since Catholics made up the overwhelming majority of the country, they were expected to numerically dominate the government, but it was expected that Dissenters as well as Anglicans would also be involved. It was to be a free and united Ireland based on much the same liberal principles of the luminaries of the American and French revolutions, and in solidarity with the republics of the world. In turn, the “rock” of this society was to be “the greatest happiness of the Greatest

⁸ Author's note: Non-Christian theists composed an infinitesimal percentage of the population, and as of yet the historiography of non-theists in Ireland in this period is virtually non-existent.

Number.” In this spirit, the early twentieth-century Irish revolutionary James Connolly deemed that “these men aimed at nothing less than a social and political revolution such as had been accomplished in France, or even greater, because the French Revolution did not enfranchise all the people.”⁹

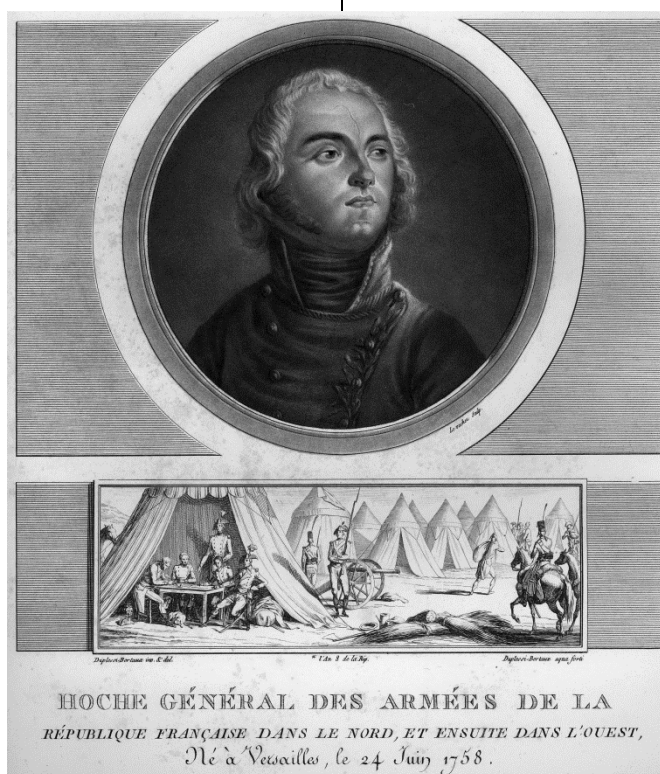
In terms of French aims, there is little evidence of any goals for Ireland itself outside of the military considerations. The French accepted that Ireland would be a republic (apart from Clarke's initial reservations), that it would aid in the war effort, and furthermore that the Irish would be free to govern themselves to the fullest extent, which would stand in contrast to their policy towards, say, Holland. The language that the French used in terms of aims and goals focused immensely on two key points: freedom of religious worship and the sanctity of private property. The

Directory, while still comparably revolutionary and republican, was nevertheless a particularly elite body of capitalists and landowners, and was not inclined to uproot landlordism or promote radical agricultural reform. France, while thrilled to develop relations with newborn republics, was primarily concerned with

Ireland as a stage of the war against England. At least, liberating Ireland would drain England of precious manpower, agricultural goods, and perhaps even some industrial output, while at best it would serve as a launching pad for the invasion of England itself, in which case the results of the conflict were hardly in doubt by either

side. As such, the French approached the campaign with the principle of non-involvement in questions of property and religion, minus supporting Catholic Emancipation, in order to avoid these as “distractions” or “diversions” from their mission.

In observing the behavior of the French forces in this episode, they indeed



⁹ See James Connolly, “Chapter VIII: United Irishmen as democrats and internationalists” in *Labour in Irish History* (1910; repr., London: 1987).

lived out their respect for their established principles of hoof support for religious freedom and the protection of private property. In the winter of 1796 French General Lazare Hoche attempted to land 16,000 troops in Bantry Bay in southern Ireland, but due to a mixture of storms, officer squabbles, and the absence of a local rising, the invasion was aborted. Nevertheless, the Irish representatives in Paris working with the Directory managed to organize a second invasion, albeit only a fraction of the size, almost two years late. From the start of the 1798 campaign in Ireland, landing in Killala, French General Jean Humbert released his proclamation to the Irish people, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Union...We swear the most inviolable respect for your properties, your laws, and all your religious opinions. Be free, be masters in your own country."¹⁰ In addition to General Humbert's proclamation, he repeated his intentions concerning property when meeting Killala's [Anglican] Bishop Stock, relaying that "the very precise order of the Directory was to establish a proper harmony between Protestants and Catholics and to induce them to unite for the common cause."¹¹ The French officers did not force the army into much invasive action concerning requisitioning. Indeed,

¹⁰ "Liberty, Equality, Fraternite, Union" in Stephan Dunford and Guy Beiner, *In Humbert's Footsteps: Mayo 1798* (2006), 49.

¹¹ Richard Hayes, "An Officer's Account of the French Campaign in Ireland," *The Irish Sword* 6 (Summer 1955): 112.

the officers, rather than infringing on the much-noted wealth of the Protestants in Castlebar, complained of the new Irish Republic's inability to obtain for the troops anything more than just potatoes and some beef and mutton, let alone bread, although the limited meat, bread, and wine that was procured, despite being insufficient for the French officers, was still progress for the Irish peasants.¹² In the end, the French remained true to their pledge to respect the rights of property. Likewise, for these "godless Jacobins" there were no notable instances of looting or closing of churches, suppression of religious expression whether private or public, or actions against the clergy of any denomination. Moreover, the French noted how the Irish peasantry swore loyalty "To France and the Sacred Virgin!" and how "They consider us their liberators and protectors of their Catholic religion."¹³

In terms of the republic establish, often referred to as the Republic of Connaught based on its residency in that province, it was in reality more of a local administration, not intended to be the

¹² For instance see Louis-Octave Fontaine, "Notice historique de la descente des Français en Irlande au mois de thermidor, an VI, sous les ordres du général Humbert" in J. Sarrazin, J.-L. Jobit, and L.-O. Fontaine, *La Descente des Français en Irlande, 1798* (Paris: 1998), 78.

¹³ John Cooney, "En Campagne Avec L'Armée D'Humbert," *Études Irlandaises* 23 (1998): 144. Note: The "Sacred Virgin" refers in Christian mythology to Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is believed to have delivered him via a "virgin birth."

main body of the national government in the event of an Irish victory. As such, it was not the National Convention for which the United Irishmen had called, nor was it guided by the United Irish themselves, with their leadership arrested, killed, or dispersed prior to the premature risings in May of that year [1798], nor was it filled with religiously diverse members. The “republic” was in actuality a council of twelve local notables around Castlebar, all Catholics and none of them particularly enthusiastic about the revolution, even their president, John Moore. Its primary task was not so much the administration of Connaught as it was the requisitioning and supplying of both the Irish and French armies. These delegates performed admirably for a nation at rest, which is mediocre at best in the context of a revolution. They undertook no property reform, requisitioned neither from church or aristocrat, and were unable to notably improve military recruitment, yet to their credit they managed to earn the commendation of local Protestants.¹⁴ This government lasted from roughly 27 August, with the victory at the “Races of Castlebar,” until 23 September, falling by default and by force when the joint French and Irish armies, having made astonishing progress against all odds in the campaign thus far, suffered defeat at British hands at the Battle of Killala.

¹⁴ J.G. Simms, “Connacht in the Eighteenth Century,” *Irish Historical Studies* 11 (September 1958): 132.

In the end, the defeat of the main Franco-Irish force entailed not only the crushing of any semblance of republican government, but also the enactment of Britain's own form of Terror, killing tens of thousands of Irish, torturing many more, burning homes, and inflicting mass incarceration on the population. The United Irishmen did get their wish for the overturning of the Irish Parliament granted, but in a perversely ironic way. The British government disbanded Ireland's Parliament (although technically it voted itself out of existence) in order to subsume the country fully into itself.¹⁵ This plan of Union was long in the making by leading British politicians, primarily Pitt the Younger, allowing for greater unity of policy and allowing England more direct control over economic policy and development. No longer were the Anglo-Celtic Isles to be home to the dual monarchy of Ireland and Great Britain under King George III and regional governments. The way was being prepared for the creation of a new entity, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, ruled from England and overwhelmingly by Englishmen (in this case specifically meaning “men”), with a few token and non-consequential Irish representatives for the sake of appearances. England's trade policies dominated Ireland as its financiers largely co-opted its capital. No substantial aid or assistance was given to the Irish,

¹⁵ Technically, the Irish Parliament voted itself out of existence, but that was merely a legal pretense.

who now were saddled with additional supremacy legally given to the Anglican Church, foremost including solely Anglican eligibility to Parliament, and who were still denied Catholic Emancipation.

What were some of the notable problems that plagued the United Irishmen and Irish revolutionaries? One of

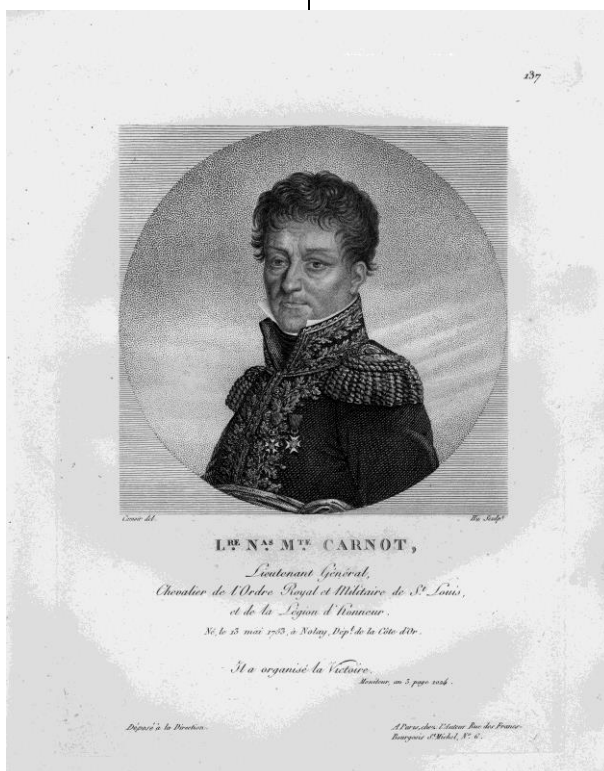
the most glaring issues was the gulf between theory and praxis. Despite managing to avoid directly stirring up religious sectarian infighting in Connaught and actively offering a vision of hope to the people, they did nothing to actively encourage the confidence and sacrifice of the peasantry, who were not given any material reason to

risk everything in order to fight for the cause amidst draconian British repression, despite the well-wishing of the peasantry. Although speaking out passionately against the aristocracy and the exploitation of the peasantry, the Irish revolutionaries did not strike out against the ruling classes, did not fight for the absolute rights peasants to the products of their labor or rights to the land, did not

act against those who had exploited or in any way opposed the interests of the peasantry, whether they be landlords, royals, or other loyalist officials, or perform any notable deed that would give the toilers any vested interest in the struggle. The introduction of minor portions of Catholic Emancipation,

embodied most notably in the fact that the rebel government of Connaught was all-Catholic (despite having been appointed by General Humbert instead of elected by what might have been a newly-created Catholic electoral base), was in itself not sufficient to inspire. Instead, the leadership focused first and foremost on pursuing the war

while maintaining policy as-is. While they might well have acted upon their program given a more substantial time frame for action or come victory in the war, situations that remain purely in the realm of speculation yet not denying the United Irishmen the benefit of the doubt, the point remains the importance of immediate action rather than presenting a



revolution without a revolution, to borrow a phrase from Robespierre.

The concept of party organization was also an issue for the United Irishmen. While any criticism must be tempered to a degree by the consideration that it was a secret society, the shortcomings must nevertheless be scrutinized and analyzed. While the society based itself on a founding program of principles, it was neither an open forum for debate akin to prominent French clubs like the Jacobins, nor a close-knit workshop of revolutionary theorists. Instead, its primary and virtually sole role was preparing and coordinating action. While action is crucial to any revolutionary movement, theory is crucial to informing action, understanding the root causes of and how to address social ills, exploiting the inherent contradictions undermining the existing social system, and maintaining a coherent revolutionary core. The lack of a fuller understanding of the operation of British administration undoubtedly contributed to the failure of the Irish leadership to take advantage of their brief and limited tenure in power.

The United Irish organizational structure also suffered most severely from its poor distribution of authority and void of cohesive lines of communication both nationally and internationally. There was no chain of command to fall back on when the British managed to crack down on

their leadership in May 1798, epitomized most clearly in the assassination of Lord Edward Fitzgerald and arrest of Arthur O'Connor, leaving local leaders across the country to valiantly, yet futilely, fight to the death in a uncoordinated and isolated manner, which was doomed to be quelled piecemeal and in due time by British forces. Not only the chain of command, but also the lines of communication were inadequately prepared. The plan for a national uprising in May was heavily reliant on the capture of the postal services, a move anticipated and circumvented by the Crown.

However, the catastrophe of 1798 was not the origin of this problem. It was embodied in the mission of the organization's prime member, Wolfe Tone, who was left to negotiate single-handedly with the French government after being exiled from Ireland in May 1795. From that period until his capture in the wake of the 1798 expedition, he would neither set foot back in Ireland nor have direct contact with the executive body of the United Irishmen except for intermittent letters to close friends. Apart from a brief meeting of Lord Fitzgerald and O'Connor with French General Lazare Hoche and his representatives in Hamburg prior to the abortive 1796 invasion, Tone was completely isolated. In such a setting, coordinating a French invasion with a massive Irish rebellion was a task of the utmost difficulty, especially since

simultaneously the United Irish leadership remain divided on which strategic approach to use: preparing for a self-reliant Irish revolt with French forces to be a desired yet ideally unnecessary boon, or relying on the arrival of a significant French force to signal and inspire Irish revolt. This ties back in with the fundamental flaw of theoretical disunity in the party.

The French failures were more blatant. 1796 was marred by internal divisions in the Directory and by the decision to divert crucial resources from the campaign to the renewed Italian campaign under the new leadership of Gen. Napoléon Bonaparte, marking a prioritization of victory on the Continent, i.e., the defeat of Austria, over combating England. The invasion itself suffered from the hasty naval preparation by General Hoche, unusually harsh storms in the Channel, and the vacillation of General Emmanuel Grouchy that ultimately resulted in the forfeiture of the expedition. In 1797 the internal divisions in the Directory culminated in Autumn in the Coup of 18 Fructidor (4 September), purging not only many of the royalists but also Director Lazare Carnot, one of the crucial members in the French government advocating for the Irish campaign. In addition, that year also saw the death of General Hoche at about the same time, 19 September, depriving the Irish cause of its most devoted and capable ally in the

French military. Finally, 1798 was suddenly and inadvertently jeopardized by the Egyptian campaign, which, having taken forces and resources previously ascribed to the Irish campaign, departed just two weeks prior to the outbreak of revolt in Ireland that May. Here again is the specter of lack of coordination between the United Irish representative Tone and developments in Ireland, with France left ignorant of the impending revolt ahead of time. General Humbert's mission was consequently a largely impromptu expeditionary force of roughly 1200 men, seemingly insufficient in and of itself to make a significant military impact on the rebellion, with a second force of roughly twice the size set to depart from Denmark but which was delayed until after Humbert's defeat and was itself captured on the seas, the only portion of any of the armies attempting to invade the Anglo-Celtic isles that was intercepted.¹⁶

During this period, from the outbreak of war between England and France in 1793 until the settling of the Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland in 1801, the British repressed the Irish mercilessly, but despite preventive measures domestically, they never considered a French invasion likely. On the other hand, the United Irish, especially after 1796, put little enough

¹⁶ Digby Smith, *The Greenhill Napoleonic Wars Data Book* (London: 1998), s.v. "GB Castlebar, 27 August 1798, clash."

faith in the possibility of French assistance that they planned their massive, national uprising in the summer of 1798 without reference to the French. When the French finally did commit seriously to the Irish struggle, it was too little and too late, and it was only after the fact that they realized how large of an opportunity they had squandered. All parties involved underestimated the French capability, but in the end, the French forces, despite the appalling state of Franco-Irish communication and how little they had to

work with, twice came within reach of the establishment of an Irish Republic. Lack of commitment not on the part of the Irish peasantry and workers, nor even amongst the military, but among the wavering and squabbling politicians of the increasingly reactionary Directory, cost the revolutionary tide dearly. The radiance of potential was snuffed by infantile moderation, while the United Irish became martyrs and their failures provided lessons to fuel and to inspire future generations of Irish Fenians and revolutionaries.

NEY'S MISSION TO SWITZERLAND, 1802-03

by Wayne Hanley, Ph.D.

When one mentions the name Michel Ney, several images may spring to mind: the intrepid, dashing redheaded hero of the Russian retreat or, perhaps, the cantankerous and reckless general who could lose sight of the big picture because of his penchant of leading from the front (as he did at the battles of Dennaiwitz and Waterloo). As with most things dealing with human endeavors, nothing is as simple as an either/or proposition. Life is too complex. While it is true that the man who would become Marshal Ney suffered from the vices of his virtues—his tendency to act with boldness, for example—to always characterize him as impulsive, reckless or unthinking is unfair. His career is replete with examples his acting with restraint and reasoned boldness. One of the more impressive such examples occurred early in his career when he was thrust into a proverbial “fish out of water” situation when then-First Consul Napoleon Bonaparte appointed Ney minister plenipotentiary to the Helvetic Republic in 1802. With no prior diplomatic experience, General Michel Ney proved himself invaluable in restoring order to a Switzerland on the verge of civil war and political chaos, making possible Bonaparte’s Act of Mediation and laying the foundations for positive relations

between France and that mountain country for most of the Napoleonic period.

Ney’s task was not an easy one: the French Revolution and its subsequent wars against the First and Second Coalitions were not kind to Switzerland. The first unrest occurred in Geneva where a February 1789 spike in food prices caused residents to rise up against the government and demanded a restoration of “ancient rights.” Add to this, the unrest caused by reports of the fate of Swiss regiments in the employ of the French king and the spread of French Revolutionary ideals (especially in the French-speaking western regions), and the subsequent unrest caused by the disenfranchised seeking political equality with the oligarchies of the major cantons.¹ During the period of the French Revolution, conflict became the norm in the Swiss Confederation, with peasants rising against burghers, with Catholics struggling against Protestants, with smaller, dependent cantons attempting to break the yokes of the dominant cantons, and with the dominant cantons struggling against their neighbors to expand their

¹ Marc H. Lerner, “The Helvetic Republic: An Ambivalent Reception of French Revolutionary Liberty,” *French History* 18 (2004), 54-56; and John Wilson, *The History of Switzerland* (Philadelphia: Carey and Lea, 1832), 240-41.

hegemonies. By 1797, French actions added to the turmoil when the Executive Directory encouraged political unrest, and General Bonaparte encouraged several small border cantons to terminate their associations with the Swiss Confederation only to be incorporated in the newly created Cisalpine Republic (in part to ensure the security of key alpine passes). The French annexation of Basle quickly followed.² The situation only worsened the following year when the French invaded the rest of the country.

Encouraged by Swiss expatriates Frédéric-César Laharpe and Peter Ochs the canton of Vaud (Laharpe's native canton) revolted against Bernese domination, declared itself the independent republic of Leman, and appealed for French assistance.³ Three

² Wilson, 244; Alexander Grab, *Napoleon and the Transformation of Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 114; and Fernand Beaucour, "Napoleon and the Valais," *The Consortium on Revolutionary Europe, 1750-1850: Proceedings* (1990): 838-39. See also Bonaparte to the Minister of Foreign Relations, 21 October 1797, Napoleon Bonaparte, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier publiée par ordre de l'Empereur Napoléon*, (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1858-1869), No. 2313, III, 525.

³ Lerner, 65. In a brief note, General Bonaparte congratulates the deputies of the Vaud for having "broken the chains" of Berne. Bonaparte to the Deputies of the Vaud, Paris, 24 February 1798, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 2420, III, 644. A few days later, Bonaparte writes from Paris to the Executive Directory of the Cisalpine Republic, suggesting that they should support and encourage similar political uprisings as had occurred in the Vaud. See Bonaparte to the Executive Directory of

months later General Guillaume Brune marched into Berne, effectively bringing an end to the centuries-old Swiss Confederation. Brune destroyed monuments commemorating Swiss independence and seized the Bernese treasury (which was used, in part, to finance Bonaparte's Egyptian campaign). Over the next several months, Leman was annexed to France with Geneva as its departmental capital, and a unitary government, the Helvetic Republic, was established for the rest Switzerland as a French puppet-state. Briefly the forest cantons, under the leadership of Aloys Reding, resisted Helvetic and French forces, but despite several victories, even he was forced to accept the new order.⁴ Social and political changes, inspired by those of France, were implemented, the cantons reorganized, feudalism ended, civil equality established, and the Swiss franc among a host of other reforms were

the Cisalpine Republic [undated], *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 2424, III, 653.

⁴ Édouard Guillon, *Napoléon et la Suisse (1803-1815) après les documents inédits des Affaires Étrangères* (Paris : Librairie Plon, 1910), 44; Heinrich Zschokke, *The History of Switzerland*, trans. by Francis George Shaw (New York: Albert Mason, 1875), 270-74; René Pillorget, "Soulèvements populaire et relations franco-suisse (1798-1804)," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 120, no. 3 (2006), 267-68; Jean-René Suratteau, "Les campagnes d'Helvétie de 1798 et 1799 et la politique Jurassienne du Directoire," *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 15, no. 2 (1965), 172-85; and Lerner, 70-73. The loss of Swiss independence was subject of William Wordsworth's poem, "Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland."

initiated.⁵ As part of the French imperium, the Swiss paid heavily for their alliance with France, bearing the all the costs of French occupation, and during the war of the Second Coalition, Switzerland became a major battleground as Austrian, Russian, and French armies vied for supremacy.

Fighting in Switzerland proved to be exceptionally fierce as combat operations between the major powers became commingled with a civil war among the Swiss, encouraged in part by the presence of the Austrian army and British agents trying to foster rebellion against French occupation: supporters of the old Swiss Confederation rose in insurrection against the Helvetic Republic, and centuries-old cantonal tensions were given free rein as, at times, Swiss fought against Swiss.⁶

⁵ Grab, 114-15. Grab devotes an entire chapter of this work, offering a clear, concise summary of the impact on Switzerland by the French Revolution and Napoleonic era.

⁶ For a summary of the fighting in the Grisons during 1799, see also Claude Bonnard, "Un cas de 'résistance en montagne': l'insurrection de Disentis, campagne de Masséna en Helvétie, 1799," *Revue historique des armées* 4, no. 3 (1977), 33-50. For an

Looting and pillaging followed in the wake of the major armies as the fighting ebbed and flowed. Some cantons were occupied successively by opposing forces, reeking havoc on the local economy and population. The independent canton of

Uri, for example, was occupied by French, Austrian, and Russian troops no fewer than six different times (in part because of the strategic importance of the St. Gotthard pass). In the course of this see-saw fighting, the principal city of Altdorf was inadvertently burned, leaving nearly 85% of its population homeless. For the entire canton, the cost of this type of destruction and the requisitions levied by

the various armies between October 1798 and October 1799 amounted to nearly 239 francs per person—an enormous burden. The impact of the war forced nearly 13% of the canton's population to rely on

overview of other popular uprisings against the Helvetic Republic or France, see Pillorget, 265-79. For the fate of Swiss regiments raised by the British during the Second Coalition, see C.T. Atkinson, "Swiss Levies in British Pay, 179-1801," *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 34, no. 139 (1956), 99-103.



public assistance for survival and ruined the Swiss economy.⁷ In addition the mountain country was made to bear the costs associated with maintaining the French army, and it was required to contribute 20,000 men annually to French service.⁸ Switzerland ceased to be a major theater of operations for the French and Coalition armies only with General André Masséna's victory at the second Battle of Zurich in September 1799. As observed by historian Jean-René Suratteau, "the Swiss had not known anything like this since the horrors of the Thirty Years War."⁹

Although the Treaty of Lunéville brought an end to the War of the Second Coalition and guaranteed the independence of Switzerland, it offered little respite to that country. In January 1800, the Swiss legislature initiated a revision of the constitution and replaced the Executive Directory with an executive commission (the zealously pro-French directors Ochs and La Harpe having been earlier forced from office).¹⁰ Supporters of a confederacy vied with those who supported a unitary government, and cantonal rivalries and issues resurfaced. Within months an "executive council" replaced the executive commission, which

was, in turn, replaced by a general Diet which met in Berne to draft a completely new constitution.¹¹

As the deputies met, the French First Consul monitored the developments and offered his approval of the constitution's emerging provisions (although he expressed certain reservations concerning the power to conscript troops belonging to the cantons rather than the central government). He then offered his own ideas on the subject with the "Malmaison" constitution (May 1801) as a federal compromise between the "confederates" and the "unitarians."¹² Additional French high-handedness added to the discord when Napoleon announced his intention to annex the Valais region which contained the strategically important Simplon and St. Bernard passes. With the signing of the Peace of Amiens in 1802, however, Foreign Minister Maurice Talleyrand convinced the First Consul to encourage the Francophiles of the region to declare their independence from the "one and indivisible" Helvetic Republic and create a "little republic" of

⁷ Anselm Zurfluh, "Les armées révolutionnaires à Uri (1789-1799): les conséquences démographiques," *Persée* 8, no. 1 (1989), 104-06.

⁸ A.F. Aubert, *Petite Histoire Constitutionnelle de la Suisse* (Berne: Francke Éditions, 1979), 9.

⁹ Suratteau, 188.

¹⁰ Aubert, 11-12.

¹¹ Louis Burgener, "Napoléon et la Suisse: méthodes et décisions," *The French Review* 45 (October 1971), 52; Wilson, 254; Aubert, 12; and Grab, 117.

¹² Guillon, 69; and Bonaparte to Talleyrand, Paris, 15 April 1801, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 5532, VII, 159-60.

their own whose integrity would be guaranteed by French troops.¹³

In October 1801 the Swiss dissolved the Diet, revealed their new constitution, and named Aloys Reding, the champion of Swiss confederacy, as *landammann*. Political stability appeared to have been restored. In January 1802, Napoleon responded to Reding's concerns about the impending withdrawal of French troops [in accordance with the Treaty of Lunéville] that the central government would lack the authority to keep order by praising Reding's desire for the happiness of the Swiss, reminding him of the benefits to Switzerland of a European peace, and assuring him that France would maintain "a particular interest" in Switzerland.¹⁴

¹³ Burgener, 49-50; and Beaucour, 839-41. See also Bonaparte to Talleyrand, Paris, 7 March 1801, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 5449, VII, 93-94; Bonaparte to Berthier, Paris, 2 August 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6225, VII, 695-96; and Bonaparte to Berthier, Paris, 30 August 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6293, VIII, 22-23.

¹⁴ Bonaparte to Aloys Reding, Paris, 6 January 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 5909, VII, 452-54. The maintenance of Swiss neutrality was reaffirmed two months later. See Bonaparte to Talleyrand, Paris, 7 March 1801, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 5449, VII, 93-94. Bonaparte's commitment to maintain a particular interest can also be seen in Napoleon's instructions to Talleyrand to remind the French consul to the Helvetic Republic [Citizen Verninac] that Switzerland is not a French province and that France had recognized the Swiss government and that he should leave the Swiss to govern themselves. Verninac, however, was also instructed to covertly discover those seeking unrest in various regions of Switzerland. See Bonaparte to

Political calm, however, disappeared when the Little-Council overthrew Reding in April 1802 and implemented yet another constitution. According to Swiss historian, Heinrich Zschokke, when the last of the French garrisons left the Helvetic Republic in August, "the spirit of parties and districts fearlessly broke forth with fresh violence."¹⁵ All semblance of order disappeared as the forest cantons (under the leadership of Reding) rose in rebellion against the central government; separatist movements led the Valais, Zurich, Basle, and Schaffhausen to break away. Opposition forces marched against the Helvetian capital in Berne, and the government fled to Lausanne. An internecine civil war appeared to be the next step. The French First Consul could not allow chaos to reign in a region as strategically important as Switzerland and chose to intervene. As Zschokke wonderfully sets the scene, "He commanded peace. On the reappearance of his formidable army (21st Oct.), all parties laid down their arms and requested him to mediate between them; Swiss trusted Swiss no longer."¹⁶ And Michel Ney was

Talleyrand, Paris, 20 March 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6001, VII, 527-28.

¹⁵ Zschokke, 279.

¹⁶ Zschokke, 279. At least one skeptical Swiss historian saw Napoleon's timing of the French withdrawal in 1802 as "one of the most perfidious masterstrokes of Napoleonic statecraft," but as diplomatic historian R.B. Mowat points out, Bonaparte was bound by the Treaty of Lunéville to remove all French troops. See R.B. Mowat, *The*

Bonaparte's choice to oversee the restoration of order and the creation of political stability in the Switzerland.

At first glance, Napoleon's choice may seem strange. Prior to this assignment, General Ney had not been part of the First Consul's inner circle of veterans from the Army of Italy; instead he had served in the Army of the Rhine under General Jean Moreau, one of Napoleon's potential rivals. Ney had no prior diplomatic experience, and he was on his honeymoon, having recently married Aglaé Louise Auguié. Michel Ney, however, did possess qualifications which no doubt affected Bonaparte's decisions. Ney had served as one of General Masséna's divisional commanders during the 1798-99 campaign in Switzerland and, thus, possessed some knowledge of the geography and the people.¹⁷ Born in Saarlouis (in what is today Germany), the red-headed general grew up speaking both

Diplomacy of Napoleon (New York: Russell and Russell, 1971), 114-15.

¹⁷ [Michel Ney], *The Memoirs of Marshal Ney Published by his Family* Volume 2 (London: Bull and Churton, 1833), 72. Because of his untimely death, Michel Ney never had the opportunity to write his memoirs. His second son (Aloys) with the aid of General Foy, collected the Marshal's diaries and notes and rewrote them as the two-volume *The Memoirs of Marshal Ney Published by his Family* in 1833, which covered Ney's life to 1805. Aglaé Louise Auguié was a friend of Hortense de Beauharnais, Joséphine's daughter (and the First Consul's step-daughter). Hortense and Joséphine played match-maker for the couple, and their marriage brought Ney into Bonaparte's family circle.

French and German, an asset that would to prove extremely important.

Furthermore, during this period, the First Consul preferred to employ generals on diplomatic missions. As historian R.B. Mowat observes, during the Consulate:

Bonaparte was coming more and more to employ soldiers as ambassadors, perhaps as being men whose normal attitude was to issue commands rather than make requests, and who deal with little in compromise. Thus he sent General Brune to Constantinople, General Gouvion St. Cyr to Madrid, General Lannes to Portugal, and General Andréossy to London, Colonel Sebastiani to Egypt.¹⁸

And to Switzerland with virtually no warning, Bonaparte sent Ney.

The first inkling that General Ney had that his honeymoon would be cut short by an urgent mission was when the First Consul's order arrived via Minister of War Alexandre Berthier. Bonaparte instructed Ney to proceed immediately to Geneva where the 73rd and 87th demi-brigades (from the Valais) would be placed under his command as would 600 men from the 78th demi-brigade in Chambéry which would rendezvous with the general in Geneva. Six additional battalions and six artillery pieces from the 5th Military Division in Huningen were also to be made available as were chasseur regiments from

¹⁸ Mowat, 117.

both the 5th and 6th Military Divisions. Additional forces were available for transfer from the Army of Italy, if necessary (in all, Ney had at his disposal 12 infantry battalions, 6 squadrons of cavalry, and 12 cannon).¹⁹ These orders also informed Ney that further instructions concerning his “mission of conciliation” and that recommended the disposition of his forces would be awaiting his arrival in Geneva.²⁰ In the meantime, the First Consul’s aide-de-camp, Colonel Jean Rapp had been dispatched to Switzerland with a proclamation to 18 cantons of the Helvetic Republic, declaring the reasons for French intervention, assuring the Swiss that France had no other ambitions than to

restore peace, and summoning the Swiss senate to meet in Berne to facilitate negotiations and to select representatives who would go to Paris to confer with the First Consul.²¹

General Ney arrived in Geneva within a week of receiving his initial orders.²² During his journey, he made excellent use of his time, gathering as much information as possible on Switzerland and its current political situation and especially on the major political players and their political and military positions. In Geneva, the senior officer, Brigadier General Jean Mathieu Seras, collected pamphlets, reports and other publications produced by the various political factions, which outlined their positions and objectives. As noted in Ney’s *Memoirs*, “by means of these documents Ney soon discovered what projects he had to repress, and what kind of men he was sent to oppose.”²³ Whatever information Seras could not obtain, Verninac, the long-time French consul to the Helvetic Republic, provided. Especially valuable were Verninac’s biographies and assessments of the officers commanding the insurgent forces. General Niklaus

¹⁹ Henri Bonnal, *La Vie Militaire de Maréchal Ney*, t. 1, (Paris: Librairie Militaire R. Chapelot et Cie, 1910), 373. At the beginning of the 20th Century, General Bonnal wrote his three volume work, *La Vie Militaire de Maréchal Ney*, based on unlimited access to the Ney papers and other archival holdings. Incredibly well-documented with much correspondence copied verbatim, this work covered Ney’s life until the eve of the Russian campaign. Unfortunately, Bonnal’s death in 1917 cut short his project to cover the marshal’s entire military career.

²⁰ Bonaparte to Berthier, Paris, 28 September 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6349, VIII, 65-66. Several days earlier, the First Consul had informed Talleyrand of his intention to place Ney in command of 30,000 men, which were already in route to Switzerland, to restore order. This same letter also outlined Bonaparte’s intentions to guarantee the equality of rights in Switzerland and to restore order not only for the Swiss, but “in the interests of the 40 million people that [he governed].” See Bonaparte to Talleyrand, Paris, 23 September 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6339, VIII, 58-60.

²¹ Ney, 84; Bonaparte to Talleyrand, Saint-Cloud, 30 September 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6351, VIII, 67-68; and Proclamation to the 18 Cantons of the Helvetic Republic, Saint-Cloud, 30 September 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6352, VIII, 69-71.

²² Bonnal, 365.

²³ Ney, 73.

Bachmann, for example, had previously served as a colonel in the Swiss Guards and then as a major-general in the Piedmontese army, and had raised a Swiss regiment for British during the War of the Second Coalition. According to Verninac, he “is said to possess military talents.”²⁴ As for Aloys Reding, the French diplomat noted that “he has ever shown himself an enemy to France. . . . His talents are not above mediocrity; but he is ambitious, obstinate, and very firm in following up what he determines upon.”²⁵ In all Verninac provided the names of and key information on at least 25 opposition leaders: his insights would prove invaluable to Ney during his mission.

Upon arriving in Geneva, General Ney received the promised additional orders for his three part mission: 1) to inform the Swiss of Napoleon’s decision “to reestablish order in [that] unfortunate country,” 2) to fulfill the role of mediator when the opportunity presented, and 3) to be prepared to act with force if necessary.²⁶ Two weeks later, General Ney received an additional dispatch from Talleyrand, informing him of his appointment as minister plenipotentiary with instructions to proceed to Berne in support of the

Helvetian central government.²⁷ More orders followed, giving Ney all necessary policing authority and urging him to be prepared to use force while attempting to avoid bloodshed.²⁸ As his forces were still assembling, Ney had with him only 400 soldiers of the 2nd light infantry and a single aide-de-camp, Captain Louis Béchet de Léocourt. Fortunately, these troops were not immediately needed for combat operations: Bonaparte’s proclamation had favorably prepared the way for compromise and the restoration of order, and Rapp’s mission had secured an armistice with insurgent forces under the command of Bachman.²⁹ Although the initial signs appeared to favor a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Switzerland, Ney took the precaution of deploying his troops in case the situation suddenly changed and called for military operations. This proved

²⁴ Ney, 79.

²⁵ Ney, 80.

²⁶ Bonaparte to Berthier, Paris, 2 October 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6359, VIII, 75-77.

²⁷ Ney, 93. See also Ney’s Appointment as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Helvetian Republic, 17 October 1802, Archives Nationales, AN 137, AP1, dossier 249; and Bonaparte to Berthier, Paris, 31 October 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6404, VIII, 105-06.

²⁸ Bonaparte to Berthier, Paris, 15 October 1802, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6370, VIII, 83-85.

²⁹ Ney, 84-89; and Bonnal, 372. In meeting with opposition leaders in Lausanne, for example, Colonel Rapp bluntly warned confederate leaders that despite their recent victory over forces of the Helvetic Republic at Morat, that it was in their best interests to disarm and accept French mediation. Ney’s troops were in motion, and, if they did not stand down and halt their advance on Berne, the insurgent forces would be destroyed “without even the satisfaction of a glorious death” (Ney, 89).

to be a wise decision, because even as some insurgents lay down their arms, others advanced on Friburg, took the city without resistance, then evacuated to continue their opposition to the Helvetian government and French intervention.³⁰ The Swiss senate and its president Johann Dolder vacillated. When Ney tried to motivate the government to act decisively,

he obtained nothing but sterile protestations and empty assurances. . . . The very name of Reding threw these pusillanimous magistrates into an agony of dread; and Ney was obliged to repeat assurance that he had already given them, that he would disperse the diet of Schwyz, and take care that the decrees of the senate should be executed.³¹

When Colonel Rapp's attempt to reason with Reding and the wayward diet proved ineffective, Ney dispatched to Schwyz his own aide-de-camp, Captain Béchét de Léocourt, to make the plenipotentiary's intentions clear.

The importance of this mission cannot be underestimated. Aloys Reding was the key to disarming the cantons still in opposition; his influence in the forest cantons especially was paramount. Setting out alone, ever mindful of the dangers of travelling in potentially hostile territory, the young aide-de-camp soon

discovered he had little to fear.³² Arriving in Lucerne, Béchét de Léocourt delivered a dispatch to the local sous-prefect who then sent word to Reding that Ney's aide-de-camp wished to meet. Reding invited the captain to Schwyz where the cantonal diet was meeting and sent a mounted detail as escort for Béchét de Léocourt. At no time did the officer have reason to doubt his safety. As the aide-de-camp noted in his memoirs, "thus I, a simple captain, was received with the same honors that a minister plenipotentiary would have received when discussing important diplomatic matters."³³ As it turned out, Reding and the other leaders of the opposition had already decided to cooperate with Bonaparte's offer of mediation (they realized that while they might be able to defeat the forces of the Helvetian Republic, they stood little chance against a French Army). As Béchét de Léocourt departed to report his success to Ney, the local diet disbanded as did their forces, and French troops which arrived shortly thereafter were received without difficulties.³⁴

No doubt one of the factors that contributed to the success of Ney's aide-de-camp was the stunning military maneuvers conducted by General Seras. Even as he dispatched Béchét de Léocourt

³⁰ Ney, 90.

³¹ Ney, 102.

³² Général [Louis] Béchét de Léocourt, *Souvenirs* (Paris: Librairie Historique F. Teissedre, 1999), 174-75; Guillon, 97; Ney, 102; and Bonnal, 373-74.

³³ Béchét de Léocourt, 175.

³⁴ Béchét de Léocourt, 175-77.

to Schwyz, Ney ordered Seras immediately to take charge of the French forces concentrated at Huningen and marched on Zurich (via Basle). Simultaneously General George-Henri Eppler concentrated the forces under his command at Berne while forces on loan from the Army of Italy occupied the Grisons and the city of Coire. General Seras was particularly well-suited for this show of force. As noted in Ney's *Memoirs*, "he was a prudent and able soldier, and knew well how to make allowances for the feelings of men under political excitement. He perceived that the diet . . . was desirous only to save appearances, and he humoured it in this desire."³⁵ Seras understood the importance Ney placed on *showing* force without resorting to *using* that force. His rapid and audacious marches (covering as much as 50-60 kilometers a day) convinced would-be opponents that they were no match for French arms, but the general's crowning achievement occurred at Zurich.

There Seras's forces encountered a proverbial powder keg when the local military commander convinced the city's government to resist the French "interference" in Swiss affairs. Colonel Meyer had at his disposal approximately 600 well-trained and well-armed soldiers who were in the pay of the leaders of the insurrection. They were fully deployed, supported by "a most considerable number" of armed peasants and ready to

³⁵ Ney, 103-04.

give battle.³⁶ As Ney reported to the Minister of War, General Seras advanced his forces undeterred: "the military band, which was at the head of the French columns, inspired a holy respect among all the insurgents. The peasants cried 'Vive le grand Bonaparte! Vive la France!'" [and dispersed]. General Seras disarmed the soldiers and sent the others home with words of peace."³⁷ Once the French entered the city, they discovered it well-supplied to offer resistance and to withstand a siege: the armories contained over 40 cannon, a great quantity of muskets and more than enough of ammunition. The general's operations had been conducted without firing a single shot, and when Zurich submitted, all ideas of continuing the insurrection faded. General Seras continued on to Schwyz without opposition.³⁸

With major armed resistance broken, Ney set to work to suppress those who agitated for violence, pacifying the country. To ease tensions, the plenipotentiary sent officers, including his aide-de-camp, into the countryside to oversee the disarming the peasantry while assuring them of French goodwill. Although this deployment dispersed a sizeable portion of Ney's troops, they were deployed in a manner that enabled their

³⁶ Ney, 104-05; Ney to Berthier, [Geneva], 31 October 1802, quoted in Bonnal, 176-79.

³⁷ Ney to Berthier, [Geneva], 31 October 1802, quoted in Bonnal, 177; and Ney, 105.

³⁸ Ney, 105-06.

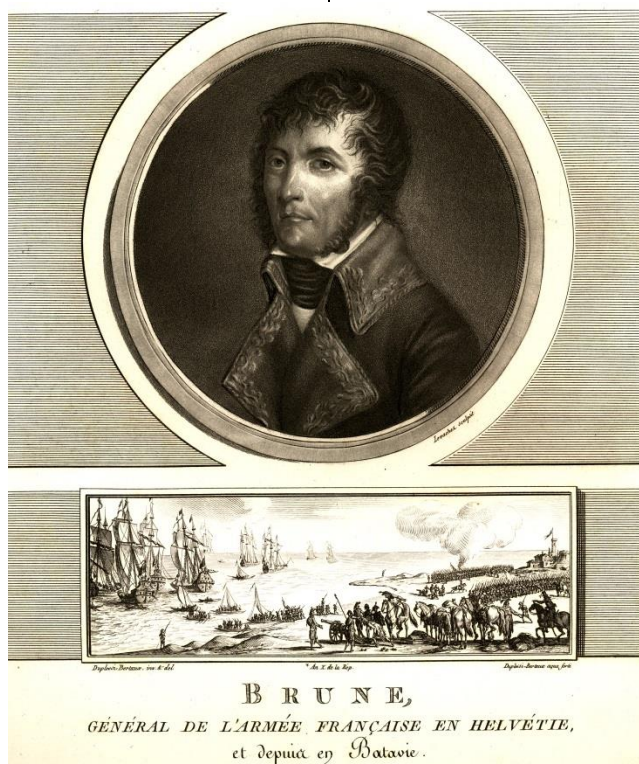
rapid concentration if necessary. Ney took efforts to minimize requisitioning supplies whenever possible and sought to enlist the support of locally influential monks to keep the peace. As a precaution, Ney also ordered the confinement of those who might become the leaders of renewed opposition to French mediation, including Aloys Reding and several other members of the Schwyz diet. When possible, Ney himself met with the various leaders, both those amenable to the French presence and those who might oppose and won them to his side. Such actions, despite a few isolated acts of violence against the French, proved successful in the maintenance of order and paved the way for a return to political stability.

By November, a Swiss delegation had departed for Paris to consult with Napoleon to write the Act of Mediation.³⁹ The rapid success of Ney's efforts earned high praise from the commanding general of the Army of Italy, Joachim Murat: "This campaign of an instant has covered you with glory. It is a

noble thing to have obtained by mild proceedings, combined with a formidable appearance, that which another would have effected by force of arms."⁴⁰

As the Swiss delegates in Paris worked with the First Consul to resolve the political issues of the Helvetic Republic, Ney worked to combat rumors and their ill effects in Berne. Ironically it was Bonaparte's 2 November proclamation to the Swiss contingent that gave rise to a new wave of unrest in Switzerland. This document outlined the goals of the Act of Mediation, but gave few details. In the absence anything concrete, Swiss minds supplied their own ideas, and each political and social faction read into the proclamation their

worst fears. Some anticipated the restoration a strong central government; others foresaw the restoration of the Swiss Confederation, with the powers of the separate cantons greatly increased; still others believed that Napoleon intended to



³⁹ Ney, 107-11; Béchet de Léocourt, 178-80; and Bonnal, 381-83.

⁴⁰ Murat to Ney, Milan, 18 November 1802, quoted in Ney, 113.

simply annex the mountain country. The minister plenipotentiary struggled to combat such flights of fancy, aided in great part because of his ability “to address each commissioner in his own native idiom, which rendered the proceedings much easier and much more rapid.”⁴¹

Simultaneously hundreds of now-unemployed Swiss mercenaries returned to their home cantons, only to find no means of livelihood and an unsympathetic populous who now saw these former soldiers, who until recently were a primary source of income for the cantons, as burdens and as potential supporters of rival political parties. Having sympathy for their plight and realizing the threat posed if these unemployed soldiers were recruited foreign powers (indeed the British agents were trying to foster unrest and had raised several Swiss regiments in 1798), Ney proposed a remedy to this twin problem, suggesting that France accept these soldiers in its service.⁴² Initially Bonaparte rejected Ney’s request, but soon changed his mind following Ney’s continued appeals. On 12 January, the minister of war wrote to Ney: “The First Consul having given due weight to your observations on this subject, has directed me to inform you that if the Helvetian government has no further necessity for the services of those troops, the French

government will take them with pleasure.”⁴³

Toward the end of February, a courier from Paris delivered Bonaparte’s Act of Mediation, a constitution which created a federal system of government, while preserving the rights and traditions of the cantons (now numbering 19, the 13 original, plus six new ones) and providing for a central government to manage affairs between the cantons, foreign policy, monetary policy and customs. France would guarantee the neutrality of Switzerland (when requested by the diet). The constitution guaranteed equal rights and freedom of movement for all Swiss. All cantons had votes in the federal diet with the six largest cantons have two votes each as well as having the right to serve as the seat of government for a term of one year. The votes of the individual federal deputies were to reflect the consensus of their own cantons. This new constitution went into effect on 15 April (with the newly elected magistrates assuming office a month earlier), and Louis d’Affry, a former colonel in the Swiss Guards before the fall of the French monarchy, was named the first landammann of the new Helvetic Republic.⁴⁴

⁴³ Berthier to Ney, Paris, 12 January 1803, quoted in Ney, 127.

⁴⁴ Act of Mediation of Switzerland, Paris, 19 February 1803, *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, No. 6590, VIII, 265-66; Bonaparte to Talleyrand, Paris, 22 February 1803, *Correspondance de*

⁴¹ Ney, 119-25 and 165.

⁴² Ney, 124-29; and Atkinson, 99-103.

Among the first items of business for this new government as it met in Friburg (d'Affry's native city) was the liquidation of public debt and the definition "national property." As might be expected, each canton tried to protect what it considered to be strictly cantonal property and was reluctant to contribute more than minimally necessary to the resources of the central government. Berne, for example, had been among the wealthiest cantons prior to the French invasion of 1798 when General Brune seized its treasury and other resources. It, therefore, demanded special consideration regarding its assessed contribution to the central government (to the irritation of the other cantons). Many cantons and other institutions also had conflicting territorial claims. Particularly thorny were the claims by the Abbey of St. Gall to lands seized during the creation of the unitary government in 1798. Ney used his influence to find compromise and allow for a peaceful resolution to these questions. In the case of St. Gall, with the aid of the papal nuncio, Ney suggested the creation of a bishopric at the Abbey, complete with a chapter and a college and with the appointment of monks to the offices required by such transformations (the abbot, however, continued to defend his

Napoléon Ier, No. 6600, VIII, 283-84; William Martin, *Histoire de la Suisse* (Lausanne : Payot, 1980), 198; Gordon E. Sherman, "The Neutrality of Switzerland," *The American Journal of International Law* 12 (April 1918), 245; Ney, 132-33; and Guillon, 108-10.

claims by appealing to Rome, but his monks fully supported the compromise solution, so the issue faded away).⁴⁵

The plenipotentiary's moderating influence defused another potentially explosive issue—the fate of the arrested opposition leaders, like Aloys Reding. In late February, General Ney received instructions that these political prisoners should be exiled to Paris and not allowed to return to their homes. Ney had previously met with the prisoners (especially Reding) and was convinced that they no longer posed a threat. What transpired in those meetings is not recorded, but the general nicknamed his second son Aloys.⁴⁶ On 27 February, Ney requested that his government to reconsider its position, pointing out that the Act of Mediation pardoned all political actions taken prior to its implementation and that Ney believed "their freedom ought to be full, entire, and free from restriction."⁴⁷ When Talleyrand did not respond to the minister plenipotentiary's request, the General appealed directly to the First Consul, who seconded Ney's opinion. The political prisoners were set free without restriction. Several were

⁴⁵ Ney, 145-52; and "Ney to Council of St. Gall," 20 Octobre 1803, Archives Nationales, AN 137, AP 3, dossier 11.

⁴⁶ Harold Kurtz, *The Trial of Marshal Ney* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1957), 40-41.

⁴⁷ Ney to Talleyrand, Berne, 27 February 1803, quoted in Ney, 142-43; and Béchét de Léocourt, 177-78.

elected to head their local diets, and while they offered political opposition to the idea of a Swiss federation and vehemently argued for traditional cantonal rights, they raised no rebellion. According to Ney's memoirs, he "was thus able to yield to the wishes of the people, and his doing so rendered him very popular."⁴⁸ The favor he earned by such actions aided his mission and demonstrated the good intentions of France.

The last phase of Ney's diplomatic mission proved more challenging to negotiate than initially thought because of the international situation: Britain had declared war on France and the campaign in St. Domingo was proving disastrous. Rumors again arose and created a crisis. A great concern among Swiss soldiers was the possibility of being sent to the West Indies to replace French losses there. Helvetic troops stationed in Berne began to desert and threatened to mutiny, disrupting discipline throughout the Swiss army. Direct appeals by the *landammann* and the plenipotentiary seemed to have calmed the situation, but General Ney ordered a doubling of French patrols, hoping that a show force would maintain order.⁴⁹ Despite these efforts, late in the evening of 27 March Swiss soldiers overpowered their officers and mutinied. In the chaos, a

corporal of the 42nd demi-brigade was killed, and only the efforts of the unit's commander kept the French troops from seeking vengeance as they disarmed the mutineers and restored order. The next morning, a court-martial condemned a single Swiss grenadier to death as an example to the others. The mutineers understood the message, and there were no further problems.

With this crisis resolved, the minister plenipotentiary focused on concluding the defensive treaty with Switzerland and the military capitulation to determine the manner with which Swiss troops would be employed in French service. The Swiss diet was reluctant to enter any sort of binding agreement that committed Helvetic soldiers to a French cause, complaining that the proposed levy of Swiss troops represented twice the number that had been specified in the 1771 treaty with France. Ney, who had done his homework, countered, noting that as a percentage of population, the 1771 commitments were actually larger than the current proposal. When the matter of relative economic contributions to support the mutual defense treaty arrived, the Swiss "wanted to be freed from every obligation, so that they might proceed without restraint."⁵⁰ When no resolution could be achieved, General Ney sent away the Helvetic representatives, informing them that he would have to consult with

⁴⁸ Ney, 144.

⁴⁹ Ney, 137-40. See also Ney to General Wonderveidt, 26 March 1803, Archives Nationales, AN 137, AP 2, dossier 10.

⁵⁰ Ney, 164; and Guillon, 117-18.

the French foreign minister before the negotiations could continue. The next day, Louis d’Affry encouraged Ney to resume negotiations, noting that the Swiss deputies had overstepped their authority and would be more cooperative. The talks resumed, “and each turned his attention seriously to settling upon an equitable basis the treaty of alliance. . . . Ney had always a pen in hand; he led the debate on each question, and wrote down each resolution the instant it was carried.”⁵¹ In these negotiations, the plenipotentiary’s ability to speak both German and French proved beneficial and enabled the negotiations to conclude in a timely manner. Writing the military capitulation proved an easier task: “The Swiss were anxious to adopt the French improvements in the military art, possess troops of all arms, and substitute the system of legions for that of regiments recommended in the plan.”⁵² In all, the Helvetic Republic was to supply France four regiments of 4,000 men each with the right to recall them to Switzerland if they were needed for national defense.⁵³ When Ney submitted the draft documents to Bonaparte for approval, he received affirmation of his efforts when the First Consul authorized the minister plenipotentiary to sign both treaties on behalf of France (and even allowed him the discretion make last minute changes if

necessary to win final Swiss approval of the documents).⁵⁴

By December 1803, with the treaties ratified, Michel Ney’s diplomatic mission drew to a close, and he prepared to return to France. The Switzerland he would leave was much different from the one he witnessed when he arrived in October 1802. Political stability had been restored; civil rights were now shared by all; and Swiss neutrality and security were guaranteed by France. The Swiss recognized Ney’s contributions to these conditions, acknowledging his “patient and mild manner.”⁵⁵ The residents of Soleure, St. Gall, and Appenzell publicly thanked the French general, and the citizens of Berne struck a medal commemorating Ney’s achievements and planned to erect a monument in his honor. In Friburg, the *landammann* Louis d’Affry presented to Ney a diamond encrusted snuff box with a monogram of Switzerland and an official letter of thanks, noting that “Switzerland having become happy and peaceable by this mediation, will not separate your name from that of the mediator himself.”⁵⁶

When General Ney reentered France and made his way to his new assignment (as commanding general of the

⁵¹ Ney, 165.

⁵² Ney, 171.

⁵³ Ney, 174; Guillon, 118; and Mowat, 115-16.

⁵⁴ Talleyrand to Ney, Paris, 21 September 1803, quoted in Ney, 174-76.

⁵⁵ Ney, 181.

⁵⁶ D’Affry to Ney, Friburg, 28 December 1803, quoted in Ney, 184.

VI Corps of what would soon become the Grande Armée at Montreuil), his skills as a general and potential skills as a diplomat had proven their value. What is, perhaps, most remarkable is that for all Ney's reputation as a man of action, the mission to Switzerland demonstrated his capacity for patience and calculated reserve. From a military perspective, he was able to quell a civil war with virtually no bloodshed (only one soldier from the 42nd demi-brigade and one Swiss mutineer). He achieved this by a well-conceived and dramatic show of force and a strategic disposition of his forces. On the diplomatic side, Ney's mild manner offered a stark contrast to the contemporary diplomatic missions of other generals-turned-envoys. Colonel Horace Sebastiani's Egyptian assignment, for example, was a thinly veiled mission of espionage that proved an embarrassment, and General Jean Lannes's appointment as ambassador to Portugal serves as a lesson in how *not* to be an ambassador.⁵⁷ As minister plenipotentiary to the Helvetic Republic, General Ney demonstrated an ability to understand the competing factional and economic issues at stake (and even the broader international context). These

qualities, coupled with his language abilities and his willingness to listen to and when appropriate to act on behalf of local leaders, allowed Michel Ney to resolve a potentially explosive situation that was fraught with international consequences while earning the respect and confidence of both the Swiss and the First Consul of France. As historian Harold Kurtz noted, "the whole of this Swiss episode throws an unexpected light on Ney's character. This man who perished through political ineptitude had shown himself capable of patient, well-judged and vigorous political action."⁵⁸ Henri Bonnal best summed up this part of Ney's career: "His mission to Switzerland remains one of his most glorious achievements."⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Mowat, 117-18; and Margaret Chrisawn, "A Military Bull in a Diplomatic China Shop: General Jean Lannes's Mission to Lisbon, 1802-1804" *Napoleonic Scholarship: The Journal of the International Napoleonic Society* 1 (December 1998), journal on-line, http://www.napoleonic-series.org/ins/scholarship98/c_lannes.html (accessed 18 February 2010).

⁵⁸ Kurtz, 45.

⁵⁹ Bonnal, 405.

CONVENTION OF CINTRA, A REVISIONIST VIEW

by Dennis W. Potts, FINS

Historical Backdrop

In June of 1807, following his successful spring campaign in East Prussia culminating in the decisive victory over the Russian forces at the Battle of Friedland, Napoleon was at the apex of his power and all of Continental Europe lay at his feet. The one exception to Napoleon's almost complete dominance over Europe was the implacable hostility of Great Britain which with its navy ruled the seas and thus had the power to intervene militarily anywhere on the European Continent where an opportunity presented itself. Because Britain's wealth and power was so clearly tied to its foreign trade, Napoleon implemented what was known as the "Continental System." As part of Napoleon's attempt to enforce the Continental System he decided to occupy the Kingdom of Portugal, a longtime ally of Britain's, in summer 1807.

In August 1807, a French force of approximately 25,000 men, consisting largely of relatively inexperienced conscripts, was fitted out in France and, with the permission of the Spanish Government, was allowed to march through Spain for the purpose of invading Portugal. At the same time, Napoleon negotiated the Treaty of Fontainebleau with Spain, which called for the

dismemberment of Portugal and its division between France and Spain. This Treaty was signed on 27 October 1807. The French force entered Portugal on 23 November 1807 and occupied Lisbon on 30 November 1807. The French occupation of Portugal was completed by the very early part of 1808. In the meantime Napoleon sent additional French troops into Spain starting in November 1807 under the guise of supplying and maintaining communications with the troops in Portugal. The continuing presence of these French troops on Spanish soil over the next several months caused a marked increase in tension between the French and Spanish Governments, and in March 1808 the Spanish Prime Minister, Manuel Godoy, started recalling the Spanish troops from Portugal who had been assisting the French there.

During this time Napoleon had decided to take control of Spain and depose the Spanish royal family notwithstanding his obligations under the Treaty of Fontainebleau. Napoleon pulled this coup d'état off by inviting the royal family, King Charles IV and Queen Maria Luisa and at a later time, their son, Prince Ferdinand, with whom they were feuding, to Bayonne in Southern France ostensibly to assist them in resolving this dispute.

From that point forward Napoleon basically kept them as prisoners in France and in their place installed his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, as the new King of Spain. The failure of Prince Ferdinand, who had widespread popular support in Spain, to return from France, along with the ever-increasing presence of French forces, awakened the Spanish people to the realization that France intended to occupy their country. This triggered an outbreak of fighting in Madrid on 2 May 1808, which soon spread to the rest of the country. The popular uprising in Spain quickly spread to Portugal, and the Portuguese people rose in revolt against the French in June 1808. The French forces there managed with great difficulty to maintain control over parts of that country, but were insufficient to control the entire country. In June, the Portuguese insurgents set up a revolutionary junta in Oporto in the north of Portugal.

The British Intervention

Since the beginning of the Portuguese uprising in June, the French had been hard pressed to maintain control of Lisbon and protect their lines of communications with the French forces in Spain. The ferociousness of the Portuguese resistance had already forced the French forces to concede control of Northern Portugal to the Portuguese. By late July 1808, the most northern French outposts

were in the vicinity of Lavaos and Leyria, about halfway between Lisbon and Oporto.

At the request of the Spanish and Portuguese Juntas, Great Britain decided to intervene on the Peninsula. General Sir Arthur Wellesley, later the Duke of Wellington, commenced assembling his forces for a campaign on the Peninsula in June 1808 in Cork, Ireland. Wellesley's initial charge from Lord Castlereagh, the British Minister of War, was to establish contact with the Spanish and Portuguese national forces, collect information, assess the military situation and utilize his forces in a way that would most benefit the ongoing uprisings against the French.¹ On 15 July 1808, Wellesley received a more specific directive from Castlereagh to the effect that the British forces should launch an attack in the area around the Tagus with a view to securing Cadiz if it were to be threatened by the French forces under General DuPont. Lord Castlereagh further stated that the Government was prepared to allocate a force of 30,000 soldiers to this end.² On that same day, General Dalrymple, who had been the Governor of Gibraltar, was given the overall command

¹ *The Dispatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington during his various campaigns in India, Denmark, Portugal, Spain, The Low Countries and France from 1799-1818*, Vol. IV (1837) ("Wellington Dispatches"); Viscount Castlereagh, Secretary of State, to Lieutenant General the Hon Sir A. Wellesley, K.B. June 30, 1808.

² Castlereagh to Wellesley, July 15, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

of the British forces on the Peninsula, and General Burrard was appointed second in Command.³

Wellesley's force embarked on a fleet of British transports from Ireland in mid-July 1808. The intelligence available to Wellesley at this time was that the total French forces in Portugal were approximately 15,000 soldiers with 12,000 in the area around Lisbon.⁴ The regular Portuguese army in Northern Portugal comprised approximately 10,000 soldiers along with a supporting cast of 2,000 Spanish soldiers. A Spanish force of 20,000 soldiers was reported to be at Almaraz on the Tagus with the intention of blocking any attempt by the Army of Portugal to reestablish contact with the French forces in Spain.⁵ By this time Junot was attempting to withdraw all

available French forces to Lisbon in anticipation of the expected battle that would soon take place north of that City.⁶

On 1 August 1808, Wellesley's force disembarked at Mondego bay near

Peniche, about 120 miles north of Lisbon. While some consideration had been given to disembarking closer to Lisbon, that notion was rejected because of the difficult coastline in that area as well as the strength of the French fortress defenses there. In addition, Wellesley believed that a landing further north would insure the cooperation of the Portuguese forces in that area.⁷ On August 5, 1808, General Spencer arrived at Mondego Bay with an additional

5,000 soldiers thus bringing Wellesley's total force to more than 15,000 men.⁸ Once the British forces had been fully



³ Castlereagh to Wellesley, July 15, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

⁴ Wellesley to Castlereagh, July 21, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

⁵ Wellesley to Castlereagh, July 21, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

⁶ General Maximilien Foy, *History of the War in the Peninsula, Under Napoleon*, vol. II, (1827), 458-59.

⁷ Wellesley to Castlereagh, August 1, 1808; Wellesley to General Sir Harry Burrard; August 8, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

⁸ Wellesley to Castlereagh, August 8, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

disembarked at Mondego Bay, they moved south toward Lisbon. During this advance Wellesley's right flank was moving along the coast in close contact with the British fleet and his left flank in contact with Portuguese forces under General Freire.⁹ On 8 August 1808, a force of 10,000 under General Sir John Moore sailed from England for Portugal. A Portuguese force of 5,000 regular soldiers had been assigned by the Junta at Oporto to assist Wellesley, and another 6,500 Portuguese soldiers were assigned to blockade the French forces occupying Almeida.

On 17 August 1808, Wellesley's force attacked a small French force of approximately 4,000 infantry under General Delaborde, which had taken up defensive positions in a hilly area at the south end of a valley near Rolica. Wellesley's much superior force attempted to turn the flanks of the French defenders, but Delaborde's force was able to fall back in good order and avoid being encircled.¹⁰ The following day the British force continued to move south passing through Lourinha and reaching Vimiero, just north of the strong defensive positions at Torres Vedras only 35 miles north of Lisbon, on 21 August 1808. The day before, an additional force of 5,000 British soldiers under General Acland had disembarked

near Madeira and was able to join Wellesley's force at Vimiero. The additional force of 10,000 infantry under General Moore was expected shortly. Wellesley's plan was to attack any French force in front of him at the earliest opportunity, believing that the French could muster no more than 12-14,000 soldiers to oppose him.¹¹ Wellesley's force by this time exceeded 20,000 men.

On 20 August 1808, General Burrard came ashore and met with Wellesley. Upon hearing that Wellesley was planning to attack the French forces in front of him, Burrard decided to let that proceed.¹² General Junot, however, had already decided to take the forces available to him, totaling no more than 15,000 infantry and cavalry, and attack the British at Vimiero. Upon discerning Junot's intentions, Wellesley placed his men in strong defensive positions along the mountainous terrain facing the French and awaited their attack. The French attack was carried out on 21 August 1808, but was poorly coordinated and was carried out incrementally at different points along the British line. The British forces successfully repelled the French attacks at every point, and the French fell back in some disorder although they were able to regain their cohesion and retreat south

⁹ Wellesley to Captain Bligh, H.M.S. Alfred, August 14, 1808; and Wellington to Castlereagh, August 16, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

¹⁰ Wellesley to Castlereagh, August 17, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

¹¹ Wellesley to Castlereagh, August 21, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

¹² Burrard to Castlereagh, August 21, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

toward Lisbon in good order.¹³ Wellesley wanted to take the offensive immediately and follow on this decisive victory, but was overruled by General Burrard, who wanted to wait for the arrival of the 10,000 infantry under Moore.¹⁴ On the evening of 21 August, General Dalrymple arrived on the scene and confirmed General Burrard's decision to have the British forces maintain their positions at Vimiero. According to their later testimony before the Inquiry into the Convention of Cintra, both Dalrymple and Burrard believed that the British forces, hampered as they were by a lack of sufficient cavalry, would be taking an unnecessary risk by immediately pursuing the retreating French, who they believed would be able to occupy strong defensive positions as they fell back on Lisbon.¹⁵

The Convention

On 22 August, Junot convened a council of war with his senior officers to consider their options. After considering several alternatives, including the fighting of another battle north of Lisbon and attempting to make a forced march to reestablish communications with the French forces in Spain, Junot decided that the only realistic option was to fortify and

hold up in Lisbon until relieved by the French forces that would almost certainly seek to reestablish control over the entire Iberian Peninsula. Before undertaking that course of action the French commander decided to open negotiations with the English to see if a treaty could be arranged which would allow the Army of Portugal to withdraw and return to France.¹⁶ General François Kellerman was chosen for this task because he spoke fluent English, a fact of which the English were unaware and which was never revealed during the ensuing negotiations.¹⁷

On that same day, General Kellerman arrived under a flag of truce at the British headquarters to request a suspension of hostilities under the guise of seeking to arrange an exchange of prisoners. General Kellermann proposed a series of specific terms and conditions, not only for the suspension of hostilities but also for the evacuation of all French forces from Portugal. On that same day, both Kellermann and Wellesley signed an Armistice Agreement for the immediate suspension of hostilities.¹⁸ While the exact extent to which Wellesley, Burrard or Dalrymple dealt directly with General

¹³ Wellesley to Burrard, August 21, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

¹⁴ Wellesley to His Royal Highness, the Duke of York, August 22, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

¹⁵ Inquiry into The Convention of Cintra; Report of the Board of Inquiry, December 23, 1808.

¹⁶ Paul Thiebault, *Relation de l'Expédition du Portugal, faite en 1807 et 1808 par le Corps d'Observation de la Gironde, devenu Armée du Portugal* (1817), 207-08.

¹⁷ Jackson L. Sigler, *General Paul Thiebault, His Life and His Legacy* (2006), 213.

¹⁸ Foy, 528-30; and Wellesley to Charles Stewart, August 25, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

Kellermann is unclear, there can be no doubt that the terms and conditions of Kellermann's original proposal were discussed by all three at length before Wellesley signed off on the Armistice Agreement. This Agreement, which formed the basis for the Convention of Cintra, provided that during the suspension of hostilities a final agreement for the evacuation of all French forces along with all of their equipment and personal belongings back to France on British transports would be negotiated. A line of truce at the River Sirandre was agreed upon, the neutrality of the Russian fleet, which at that time was moored in the Tagus at Lisbon, was recognized, and it was agreed that hostilities would not be resumed without 48 hours advance notice.¹⁹

The French forces remaining in Portugal at that time totaled approximately 21,000 soldiers and were stationed primarily in the area around Lisbon, including the strong defensive position at Torres Vedras and a series of fortresses along the coast just north of Lisbon, along with smaller detachments at the frontier fortresses of Almeida and Elvas. While recriminations and differences in interpretation and recollection abounded after the Convention became such a controversial issue in England, it appears that at least

¹⁹ Suspension of Arms in *Wellington Dispatches*, 116-17.

initially, Wellesley agreed with Burrard and Dalrymple that the benefit of having the French voluntarily leave Portugal outweighed any advantages that might be realized from an attempt to force the surrender of all French forces in Portugal through military means. It appears that the central factor in this thinking was that the element of time, that is the time that it would take to forcibly dislodge the French forces from their positions in Portugal, weighed heavily in favor of the agreement being proposed by the French that would result in their immediate evacuation from Portugal.²⁰ The British thinking in this regard may have been influenced by a threat made by Junot, at the last minute just before the Convention was signed, to burn the fleet and all stores, destroy the forts, defensive works and artillery and adopt a scorched earth defense of Lisbon if the Convention was not signed.²¹

²⁰ Wellesley to Capt. P. Malcolm, August 29, 1808 in *Wellington Dispatches*.

²¹ A. Hugo, *France Militaire: Histoire des Armees Francaises de Terre et de Mer de 1792 à 1837*, vol. 4, (1838), 58-68. Junot made the following statement to Colonel Murray, the British representative who actually signed the Convention: "Do not believe you are doing me any favors, Sir, in signing this treaty. In this regard I will accept nothing from you or anybody else. It seems to me you are less committed to signing [this treaty] than I, so one more word and I am done; I will tear up the treaty, burn the fleet, the merchant marine and the arsenals, the customs facilities and all the commercial houses. I will destroy the forts and defensive works, destroy the artillery and defend Lisbon step by step, burning everything I will be forced to abandon. I will make you pay in rivers of

Although Wellesley himself signed off on the Armistice Agreement, General Murray signed off on the Convention itself on 30 August 1808, along with Generals Kellermann and Junot. The full title of this document was “Definitive Convention for the Evacuation of Portugal by the French Army.” It provided, among its more significant terms, that all places and forts in Portugal occupied by the French should be delivered up



to the British army, and that French troops should be evacuated on British transports and at British expense back to France, should not be considered prisoners of war and should be at liberty to serve wherever ordered in the future. In addition, the French army was allowed to carry with it all of its artillery, horses and ammunition, up to 60 rounds per gun, while all individuals would be at liberty to carry with them their

blood for every street and I will be everywhere in front of your army. In taking every possible step in my power to complete this destruction, I will bury myself in the ruins of the furthest extremity of the city and then we shall see what you and your Portuguese allies will have achieved by forcing me to this last resort. Reflect if you will on whether it is not a fair exchange-my army for one of the grandest capitals of Europe, its first class establishments, a fleet, a treasury and all the riches of Portugal.” Doubts about Junot’s ability to do this were expressed by the Prussian Colonel Schepeler in his *Histoire De La Revolution de l’Espagne et de Portugal*. He believed that Junot would not have had the time or means to carry out this threat had the English army immediately pursued the French forces after the battle of Vimiero and had the inhabitants of Lisbon risen up against the French.

private property or sell the same back to willing purchasers in Portugal. The British further agreed to care for any sick and wounded French personnel who could not be embarked with the troops and to return those sick and wounded soldiers back to France when they would be able to return. All debts owed by the subjects of Portugal to the French Government or otherwise founded upon the occupation of Portugal by French troops were canceled, and any Portuguese persons who did business or otherwise collaborated with the French were to be protected, and, if necessary, placed under the protection of the British

Government. An additional article provided that the Russian ships in the Tagus would be delivered to Admiral Cotton and immediately sent to England to be held until six months after the restoration of peace between England and Russia, at which time all officers, sailors and marines of the Russian fleet would be returned to Russia by British transports.²²

The evacuation of the French began in September 1808 and was completed by mid-October. On 11 October 1808, General Junot, accompanied by two of his mistresses, arrived at La Rochelle. In all, 25,747 French (of whom approximately 21,000 were under arms) were transported back to France under the provisions of the Convention of Cintra. By late November 1808, Junot and many of these same troops were back in Spain. Although clearly displeased with the military reverses in Portugal under Junot's leadership, Napoleon eventually wrote to Junot:

"You have done nothing dishonorable; you have returned my troops, my eagles and my cannons, but I certainly hoped you would do better you have won this convention by your courage, not by your dispositions; and it is

with reason that the British complained that their General signed it" ²³

Sir John Moore, the Retreat to La Corunna and Beyond

The first dispatches from Wellesley reporting on the Battle of Vimiero described an overwhelming victory over the entire French army. This news was greeted with an outpouring of public rejoicing in Britain at a time when the French military juggernaut seemed unstoppable. Bells pealed, cannons fired, and the newspaper headlines were filled with news of this great victory. Indeed, The Morning Post headline on 2 September 1808 was "Most Glorious News From Portugal, Complete Defeat of General Junot and Proposals for the Surrender of His Army." When news of the Convention of Cintra reached Britain, the government mistakenly attempted to make that into a cause of public rejoicing as well. Again, church bells were rung and cannons thundered but as the news spread and the public began to fully understand that the French army, rather than having surrendered, was being transported back to France on British vessels to fight again another day, a firestorm of controversy erupted and members of the government ran for cover. In order to separate itself from the opprobrium of the Convention,

²² *Wellington Dispatches*, 127-32.

²³ Napoleon I to Junot, 29 October 1808, *Correspondance de Napoleon Ier publiée par ordre de l'empereur Napoléon III* (Paris 1858-1869), vol. 18, no. 14386, 27.

the government decided to hold a formal inquiry.²⁴

In September 1808, Dalrymple and Wellesley were recalled to England to testify at the inquiry. While that technically left Burrard in command of the British forces in Portugal, he fell ill and soon departed as well, leaving Sir John Moore in charge of the British forces. Sir John Moore was 48 years old and an experienced soldier (having served over the course of his 25-year military career in the West Indies, Holland, Egypt, Corsica and Ireland). The instructions sent from Lord Castlereagh on 25 September 1808 informed him that the King had decided to employ 35,000 troops—30,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry—in the North of Spain to cooperate with the Spanish forces there in completing the expulsion of the French from the Peninsula. Sir John at that time had approximately 20,000 troops and some cavalry; an additional 10,000 men under General Sir David Baird were to land at La Corunna and join him in Spain. By this time the Central Junta was in Madrid and was the closest thing that Spain had to a central government. It encouraged Moore to move his force into Spain. Given the very primitive condition of the roads in Spain and Portugal, Moore's forces were not able to cross the border between Spain and Portugal until

11 November 1808, and on 13 November 1808, he arrived with his advance guard at Salamanca where he halted, originally intending to concentrate all of the forces there before moving further into Spain. The force under General Baird's command had disembarked at La Corunna on 13 October 1808. The state of the country in Galicia and Asturias was so rugged and difficult that he made very slow progress and did not arrive at Astorga, north of Salamanca, until 19 November 1808.²⁵ In the meantime, events were moving very quickly back in France.

The news of General DuPont's surrender at Bailen and Joseph Bonaparte's precipitate retreat to the Ebro River (after only ten days in Madrid as the newly installed King of Spain) infuriated Napoleon, who began to assemble a force that would reestablish French control over both Spain and Portugal. Napoleon would personally command this force, which by the end of October 1808 totaled approximately 135,000 men. French forces began crossing the Ebro in late October and Napoleon himself entered Spain on 4 November 1808. A series of decisive French victories over the Spanish armies arrayed against them forced a general withdrawal of the Spanish forces, which

²⁴ *The King's Order Convening the Inquiry into the Signing of the Convention of Cintra, November 1, 1808* (J. Pulteney [1808]).

²⁵ Adam Neale, *Spanish Campaign of 1808* Section I (The Advance to Salamanca).

allowed Napoleon to enter Madrid on 4 December 4, 1808.²⁶

News of the French victories reached General Moore after his arrival in Salamanca and his initial impulse was to retreat back to Lisbon. Upon the urging of the Central Junta as well as the representatives of the British government. Moore considered marching directly on Madrid to assist in its defense against the oncoming French. Gripped by indecision, however, Moore force remained in Salamanca until early December when, upon receiving intelligence that a small force under Marshal Soult was in the vicinity of Burgos, north of Madrid, he decided to move toward Burgos and destroy Soult's force. Moore left Salamanca on 12 December 1808.²⁷ Meanwhile Napoleon prepared to march on Portugal from his newly installed headquarters in Madrid when he received intelligence that British forces had left Salamanca and were marching northeast toward Marshal Soult. In a critical decision that had far reaching strategic consequences, Napoleon decided instead to move northwest to cut off and encircle Moore's force. A French force of 50,000 troops under Napoleon's personal

command left Madrid on 22 December 1808, and—through a forced march over the summit of the Sierra Guadarrama in a driving blizzard—sought to cut the British off at Benavente.²⁸ By this time, Moore had united with the British force under General Baird and had a total force of slightly more than 30,000 men. Receiving intelligence in the form of a letter intercepted by Spanish guerillas informing him that Napoleon was in the process of cutting off his retreat to the sea, Moore did an immediate about-face, commencing his celebrated retreat to La Corunna. His force barely escaped the trap prepared by Napoleon who personally commanded the French forces pursuing Moore until the beginning of January 1809 (when, having received word that Austria was preparing for war, the Emperor returned to France). Napoleon left Marshal Soult in charge of the French force of approximately 40,000 men with orders to pursue the British and drive them into the sea. The British evacuated approximately 20,000 of their soldiers back to England following an extremely harsh retreat and an extremely blood battle at La Corruna (on the eve of their embarkation) which cost General Moore his life.²⁹

The final result was a French victory to the extent that all of the British

²⁶ Jean Tranie and J. C. Carmigniani, *Napoleon's War in Spain, The French Peninsular Campaigns, 1807-1814* (1982), 54-62; and RH Horne, *The Life of Napoleon; A History of Napoleon Bonaparte* (1878), 277-78

²⁷ *Spanish Campaign of 1808* Section II (Politics at Salamanca) and Section III (Plans and Advance)

²⁸ *Napoleon's War in Spain*, 64-65

²⁹ *Spanish Campaign of 1808*, Section IV, (Start of the Retreat), Section V (Napoleon's leaves it to Soult) and Section VI (The Stand at Corunna).

forces on the Peninsula had been expelled except for a small force in Lisbon under General Craddock. The movement of the British forces into Spain and Moore's retreat to La Corunna had drawn the pursuing French forces northwest into Asturias and Galicia, rather than Portugal itself, which was Napoleon's original objective. Portugal remained irrevocably hostile to the French, and potentially available as a base for future British military operations on the Peninsula. At that time, there were no French troops in a position to commence offensive operations into Portugal except for Soult's already depleted force which invaded Portugal in January 1809, but was forced to evacuate northern Portugal by a combined Anglo-Portuguese force in May of that year.

Impact on the Peninsular War

There is an almost universal agreement that Napoleon's military incursion in the Peninsula was a huge mistake, putting the French forces there in the untenable position of attempting to pacify two countries where the opposition to them was universal, with an attenuated command structure, and with poorly defined strategic objectives. This allowed the British to establish a foothold in Portugal with a well trained and supplied army under the command of a person whose prowess as a military commander—especially in defensive operations—was outstanding and perfectly suited to the

conditions there. The linchpin of the various factors which ultimately led to the French expulsion from the Peninsula, however, was the ability of the Anglo-Portuguese forces to use Portugal as a secure base for forward operations. Without that, the course of the Peninsular War might have been much different. Wellington clearly foresaw this in his letter to Castlereagh of 1 August 1808:

“... My opinion is, that Great Britain ought to raise, organize and pay an Army in Portugal, consisting of 30,000 Portuguese troops, which might be easily raised at an early period; and 20,000 British, including 4,000 or 5,000 cavalry. This Army might operate on the frontiers of Portugal and Spanish Estremadura, and it would serve as the link between the kingdoms of Galicia and Andalusia: It would give Great Britain the preponderance in the conduct of the war in the peninsula; and whatever might be the result of the Spanish exertions, Portugal would be saved from the French grasp...”³⁰

³⁰ Wellesley to Castlereagh, August 1, 1808; *Wellington Dispatches*; In his Memorandum on the defense of Portugal dated March 7, 1809, Wellington expressed similar sentiments: “I have always been of opinion that Portugal might be defended, whatever might be the result of the contest in Spain; and that in the mean time, the measures adopted for the defense of Portugal would be highly useful to the Spaniards in their contest with the French. . . . My opinion was, that even if Spain should have been conquered, the French would not have been able to overrun Portugal with

The question of whether or not the Convention of Cintra changed the outcome of the Peninsular War depends on how you answer two questions: 1) Whether the French in Portugal would have been able to hold out after Vimiero long enough for the French forces which Napoleon led into Spain in November 1808 to relieve them; and 2) What Napoleon's intentions were after he had retaken Madrid in early December 1808.

It is clear from the comments of the English Generals actually involved in negotiating the Convention (Dalrymple, Burrard and Wellington) that they believed that it would take quite some time to dislodge the French from the positions which they occupied in Portugal at that time. Aside from occupying strong defensive positions along the northern

a smaller force than 100,000; and that as long as the contest should continue in Spain this force, if it could be put in a state of activity, would be highly useful to the Spaniards, it might have eventually have decided the contest. . . .” *Wellington Dispatches*, 261-63.



approaches to Lisbon at Torres Vedras and along the Tagus, the French occupied powerful defensive positions at the frontier fortresses of Almeida and Elvas, which guarded the entrances into Portugal from Spain. Any attempt by the British or Portuguese to move into southern Portugal would have required them to bring their forces across the Tagus, a wide and powerful river, in the face of strong French opposition. The total French

troops available to fight such a defensive war were approximately 25,000. The addition of Sir John Moore's force of 10,000 soldiers and the Portuguese forces that were actively involved in the conflict would have given the British a superiority in numbers, but not

a decisive one given the strength of the defensive positions occupied by the French. Sir John Moore expressed a similar view in his letter of 2 October 1808 from Quelus Camp in Portugal.³¹

³¹ “ . . . The action of the 21st was stated by Sir Arthur's dispatch to have been fought against the

While Napoleon's army entered Madrid in early December 1808, it had only commenced its offensive across the Ebro River at the beginning of November. By the time Madrid fell the Spanish armies had been decisively defeated and were only capable of sporadic resistance. One can argue that Napoleon would not have been able to relieve the besieged French forces in Portugal until the end of 1808 or the beginning of 1809, and that it would have been difficult for the French to hold out for that long against British and Portuguese forces which were numerically superior and well supplied. In October 1808 when Napoleon was assembling his forces for the offensive in Spain and Portugal, however, the Convention had already been signed, and all of the French forces in Portugal had already returned to France, a fact that certainly influenced the

collected force of the French in Portugal, commanded by Junot in person. It is true that that they were commanded by Junot, but the number was from 12,000 to 14,000, whereas it was then known that they had 20,000 men in Portugal. It has since been known that they had from 23,000 to 24,000. Whether we should have been more successful had the victory on the 21st been immediately followed up, it is impossible for a person not present to decide. Every one understands that a victorious army knows no difficulties, and that against a beaten army much may be risked; but by following at that moment we removed from our ships and our supplies; the enemy had superior cavalry unbroken, and we had difficult country ahead, known the enemy, unknown to us. The least check would have proved fatal to us, though the pursuit might, if unchecked, have led at once to Lisbon. . . . " *The Diary of Sir John Moore*, 2 vols. ed. by Major-General Sir J.F. Maurice (London: Edward Arnold, 1904).

speed with which this was done. There can be no doubt but that if the Convention had not been signed and the French remained in Portugal under siege by superior British and Portuguese forces, Napoleon would have accelerated his preparations for this offensive, and his first order of business would have been to relieve the French forces in Portugal.

The day after Vimiero Junot convened a council of war in Lisbon. At that time several alternatives were discussed, including fighting another battle north of Lisbon, attempting to rejoin the French forces in Spain and simply fortifying Lisbon itself and holding out until relieved. The consensus was that the only realistic possibility was to fortify Lisbon and hold out there as long as possible, but even that was fraught with difficulty because Junot had ignored earlier recommendations from his senior officers that Lisbon be fortified and because there was a shortage of rations. The final decision that day was to seek a treaty with the British which would allow the French army to be evacuated from Portugal or, if that could not be accomplished, to go down fighting in Lisbon.

Critical to this analysis is Sir John Moore's expedition to Spain, which began in November 1808. As discussed earlier in this paper, it was the presence of Sir John Moore's force of approximately 30,000

men north of Madrid, near Burgos, which had distracted Napoleon from his original plan to march directly on Portugal. Instead, Napoleon moved north in an attempt to cut Sir John Moore's force off from its base in Portugal. This resulted in the retreat to La Corunna and the embarkation of the remaining British force from that port in January 1809. It was General Moore's ability to mount this military operation into central Spain, however, that brought about the change in Napoleon's plan of attack and spared Portugal.³²

The question then is whether such a military operation could have mounted had the British been forced to lay siege to the French army in Lisbon in September 1808? Absent an almost immediate capitulation by the French, the answer to this question is probably "no." This is supported by the timeline for General Moore's expedition to Spain following the Convention of Cintra. After the signing of the Convention, virtually all of the French

forces in Portugal, with the exception of those in the frontier fortresses of Almeida and Elvas, were transported on British ships back to France during the month of September 1808. There were no further military hostilities of any significance after the Battle of Vimiero on 21 August 1808. Moore received instructions from Lord Castlereagh directing that the British army enter Spain on 25 September 1808. Yet even under these very favorable circumstances, General Moore's army was not able to cross the border into Spain until 11 November 1808, while the additional force under General Baird's command, which had disembarked at La Corunna on 13 October 1808, was not able to join up with General Moore's forces at Salamanca until 19 November 1808. It was not until 12 December 1808 that the combined forces of Generals Moore and Baird were able to leave Salamanca and move towards Burgos. If this timeline is any indication, it would have been virtually impossible for the British forces under General Moore to first lay siege to Lisbon and then, after what would almost certainly have been bitter and bloody fighting, mount an expedition into Spain in time to draw Napoleon away from his original plan to invade and reoccupy Portugal. Even if one assumes that the British forces would have been able to force a French surrender in Lisbon by the end of September 1808, such a military incursion into Spain would have been impossible.

³²Moore himself basically agreed with this analysis in his last dispatch to Lord Castlereagh from La Corunna on January 13, 1809: "... and it was necessary to risk this Army to convince the people of England, as well as the rest of Europe, that the Spaniards had neither the power, neither the inclination to make any efforts for themselves. It was for this reason that I marched to Sahagun. As a diversion, it succeeded: It brought the whole disposable force of the French against this Army, and it has been allowed to follow it, without a single movement being made to favor its retreat." Moore to Castlereagh, January 13, 1809, *Dispatches of Sir John Moore*, 198.

When Wellesley, Dalrymple and Burrard testified before the Board of Inquiry, they were all in agreement on one point: The primary advantage afforded by the Armistice and Convention was that the French would be immediately removed from Portugal thus enabling the British and their allies to commence military operations against the French in Spain at a much earlier point in time. This figured so prominently in Wellesley's thinking that he was willing to tolerate the other, more onerous terms of the Convention, which basically required the British at their own expense to evacuate a defeated enemy with all of its military equipment, stores, property and loot back to its country of origin knowing that these same troops would probably be fighting against the British in the near future. Although it is difficult to establish exactly how long Wellesley, Dalrymple and Burrard thought it would take to dislodge the French from their very strong defensive positions in and around Lisbon and in the frontier fortresses of Almeida and Elvas, this at a minimum would have taken a period of several months, and probably could not have been completed before the end of 1808.

Had military hostilities continued in Portugal after Vimiero, and had—as one would expect—the Anglo-Portuguese forces besieging the French forces continued their pressure, there can be no doubt that Napoleon's first order of

business would have been to relieve the beleaguered French forces and restore French control over Portugal. Under this scenario, Napoleon likely would have been able to quickly brush aside the Spanish forces facing him and proceed directly to the relief of the French forces in Portugal. Such an operation would have, no doubt, resulted in the complete British evacuation of Portugal. Napoleon, having gained control of Portugal for the second time, would likely have fortified the defensive positions along the Portuguese coast and established strong garrisons at Oporto and Lisbon so as to preclude any future British military expeditions there. Under these circumstances, any major British military intervention on the Peninsula would have come to an end, at least for the time being.

Napoleon's intention to bring the entire Peninsula, both Spain and Portugal, under French control cannot be doubted given not only the size of the force that he had assembled in Spain (280,000 men total), but also given the quality of his preparations which included the formation of an advance guard under Generals Sasalle and Milhaud, two divisions of dragoons under General Bessières, and an entire corps, moving west through Talavera on the road to Badajoz, the southern gateway to Portugal. Napoleon ordered Victor and Latour-Maubourg to proceed to Toledo and Aranjuez while the forces under Ney and Lapisse were to remain at Madrid. Soult was assigned to

occupy Santander and to cover Burgos. Once these preparations were complete, Napoleon intended to place himself at the head of a force of 50,000 soldiers and march on Portugal through Talavera and Badajoz.³³ Napoleon's intentions in this regard are confirmed by the pronouncements he made both before and after he had taken Madrid. These demonstrate that he was not solely concerned with the military subjugation of Spain and Portugal, but was intent on modernizing these countries and remaking them in the image Revolutionary France. They further demonstrate that he specifically intended to bring Portugal under French control once again.³⁴

³³Napoleon's War in Spain, 65

³⁴ "I depart in a few days to place myself at the head of my troops, and, with the aid of God, to crown in Madrid the King of Spain, and to place our eagles on the Fort of Lisbon. . . ." Napoleon's Address to the Legislative Council in Paris, October, 1808: ". . . the hideous presence of the leopard contaminates the peninsula of Spain and Portugal. In terror he must fly before you. Let us bear our triumphal eagles to the pillars of Hercules. . . ." Napoleon's Proclamation to his Soldiers, November 1808: "____ The English armies I will drive from the Peninsula; Saragosa, Valencia, Seville shall be reduced, either by persuasion or by the force of arms. There is no obstacle capable of retarding for any length of time the execution of my will ____." Napoleon's address to an assembly of nobles, clergy and other Spanish leaders after entering Madrid, December, 1808: "____ I will speedily expel from the Peninsula that English Army which has been dispatched to Spain, not to aid you, but to inspire in you a false confidence and to deceive you." Napoleon's proclamation to the people of Madrid on December

The question of whether or not the Convention of Cintra was, on balance, worthwhile from a military point of view cannot be fully appreciated without looking at what might have happened on the Peninsula had it not taken place. The advantage of historical hindsight is that events such as the Convention of Cintra—criticized, maligned and basically thrown in the dustbin of history—can be reevaluated and fully appreciated. In this analysis, the Convention of Cintra is deserving of a new look, retrieval from the dustbin of history, and an appreciation of what it ultimately achieved for the Allied forces on the Peninsula.

7, 1808. *Napoleon's Addresses: 1808 Spanish Campaign*, comp. by Tom Holmberg.

FRIENDS OR ENEMIES? DECONSTRUCTING THE ENEMY: THE WOODEN VIRGIN

by María Zozaya Montes*

This paper will present an analysis of a part of the Peninsular war that has been little studied, that of the Spanish prisoners in France. We will see how the image that some military engineers had of the French people (as friends), which does not correspond to the official version (as enemies) normally accepted.

Historical Context, the Fontainebleau Treaty

According to the Treaty of Fontainebleau, signed in 1807, Spain and France agreed to invade Portugal, which was a key for the British trade with Europe. Thus, theoretically, Napoleon's Army entered Spain to occupy Portugal. Actually, what the French were doing was to silently invade their ally's country. The Spanish people and part of the army were not in the mood to accept this situation, and conspired to fight the French. Within this context the insurrection of Madrid in May 1808 took place. After Madrid's defeat, in June 1808 a few Professors of the Royal Academy of Military Engineers at Alcalá de Henares went to Valencia and Saragossa to organise their defences¹.

*I wish to thank to Odile Bouchut (CDN) for the information about Nancy's Archives and its

Those engineers and their adventures when they were captives will be the centre of our research.

The popular and military insurrection took place at almost at the same time. What was the reason for the Spanish insurrection? Between October 1807 and May 1808 the French weakened the Spanish population. The Napoleonic army's system of living off the land depleted the provisions of the towns it passed through. Its troops often committed outrages when they got drunk or took advantage of the women of the areas they occupied. This situation was compounded by the rumours of the kidnapping in France of the rightful king, Ferdinand VII. José Bonaparte, who had been placed on the throne after the so-called "Bayonne Abdications," was seen as an intruder. For these reasons considerable ill will against the Napoleonic soldiers in 1808 and 1809 was generated among the Spanish population. In most parts of the

contents, to José María Portillo (UPV) for the information of "the myth" of Ferdinand VIII and to Juan Zozaya Stabell-Hansen for correcting the translation.

¹ This episode, and especially those of the prisoners, has been little studied. Mario Sala, *Obelisco histórico en honor de los heroicos defensores de Zaragoza* (Zaragoza: Fernando el Católico, 1908), 131-47.

Iberian Peninsula the vision of “the other,” the Frenchman, soon became the incarnation of “the enemy.” This opposition was strengthened as the war went on, which was also due to the religious campaigns against Napoleon as the Antichrist, with his image being compared to that of the devil in the company of the ambassador of evil such as Talleyrand.²

“The Wooden Virgin.” The Difference between Spain and France in 1808

This image of “the other” is in my opinion summarised perfectly in the words of one of the military men who was in Zaragoza at the time. This was Baltasar Blaser, a treasury officer in June 1808,³ who at that time was to be the father of the soldier Anselmo Bláser (the future War Minister in 1853-54). He held out during the whole of the first siege of the city of Zaragoza “with my weapons in my hand,” as he would remember years later on requesting the corresponding military

crosses before his superiors.⁴ He was taken prisoner by the French, from whom he escaped once he was taken to France. Before that, the French interrogated him, and I consider his comments to be of great interest in demonstrating the gulf that existed between the Spanish and the French at the time.

He was interrogated about the treatment of the General in Chief, José de Palafox: “The enemy generals asked me various questions about the conduct of Your Excellency; they asked me how Your Excellency treated the French prisoners. I replied very well [...]” Subjected to the court of ridicule, the French questioned the valour and patriotism of the Aragonese. Baltasar Blaser continued concerning the attacks on Palafox and his men: “they also asked me what that prize idiot was thinking of not to surrender under the Imperial Eagles, to which I replied saying that both General Palafox and the city of Saragossa would defend themselves down to their last drop of blood.” At that point their religion was made fun of. On this subject Blaser declared that “the French gibed at him” that the Aragonese had “a lot of faith in the Virgin of el Pilar, which is made of a piece of wood,” saying “that they would soon demolish her church and reduce the city of Saragossa to ashes” with their bombs, grenades, and cannons, “and that

² Presbítero Andaluz, *La bestia de siete cabezas y diez cuernos ó Napoleón Emperador de los franceses: exposición literal del capítulo XIII del Apocalipsis* (Málaga: Martínez, 1808), VII, VIII, 3. Charles Esdaile, *España contra Napoleón: Guerrillas, bandoleros y el mito del pueblo en armas* (1808-1814) (Barcelona: Edhasa, 2006), 147, 164. See also: Alexander Tchoudinov, “The patriotic war in the perception of the Russian People” and Vladislav Rjeoutski, Russo-French relations in the French diaspora in Russia, 1812”, X Congress of the INS, RAS, Russia, Moscow, 9 July 2012.

³ Archivo Municipal de Zaragoza [AMZ]: Box 08185; Signature 24-3/1-37; 24-3/8, 7rº; 1808-1821.

⁴ AMZ: 24-3/8, 8rº; 19 September 1821.

the miracles of the virgin of wood would then be seen.”⁵

I consider this last fragment, on the contrast between beliefs compared with the reality of technique through the metaphor of the virgin of wood, to be highly indicative of the unbridgeable distance between the Spanish and the French of the time. It reflects the difference between an unarmed people of fervent believers opposed to a nation in which the Enlightenment had triumphed, which also possessed military technique and preparation. The French made war with ammunition; the Spanish did not have much but were driven on by a strong religious sense and feeling of communal defence against the invader. This showed the contrast between traditional beliefs and the lay and scientific world of war

technique and industrial development. That vision of “the other” as someone coming from another very different world to their traditional and religious one shaped images in the collective memory that in most cases were summarised in a narrow vision of the French enemy⁶. Most Spanish villages shared hatred of the French and the need to fight them to death.

It should be pointed out that there were exceptions, firstly among the pro-French elite that was convinced of the progress that

their influence could bring to the country.⁷ Secondly, in some regions, such as Galicia or León, the outrages of the British allies (drunks and mercenaries) meant that their inhabitants shouted proclamations such as “we want to be French.”⁸ But the



JOSEPH BONAPARTE

⁵ AMZ: 24-3/8, 5vº; 19 September 1821. That attitude to threaten to demolish the symbols of religion was very common all over Europe and Russia, and generated the image of antichrists. See also: Sergei Khomchenko, “French Prisoners in Russia and the local Population”; X Congress of the INS-RAS, Russia, Moscow, 9 July 2012.

⁶ Antoni Moliner, “La imagen de Francia y de su ejército en Cataluña durante la guerra del Francés (1808-1814)”. Jean-René Aymes; Javier Fernández Sebastián, *La imagen de Francia en España* (País Vasco: Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1997), 15-33.

⁷ Miguel Artola. *Los afrancesados* (Madrid: Alianza, 1989).

⁸ Ricardo Robledo, *William Bradford: viaje por España y Portugal. La Guerra peninsular*

prevailing perception in Spain was that of considering the French to be the enemy, as has been reflected in multiple coeval documentary registers and subsequent studies.

The Confirmation of the Enemy

Once the war was over in Spain in 1814, other state policies also contributed towards the conformation of the French as the enemy. This was the attitude of Ferdinand VII and the official parliament after the king's return in 1814. It was decreed to establish a story that would have an effect in the fight against the French yoke.⁹ An attempt was made to erase from memory the official alliances that Spain established with France in 1807 and 1808, alleging that it was all a trick played on the king. To the masses the "legitimate" Ferdinand VII had the image of the kidnapped king (whom they called "the desired one") who had been betrayed by Napoleon Bonaparte.¹⁰ He did all he

could to wipe away the memory of the alliances he established with the French state so as to "exchange" Spain for a life pension and other advantages that would ensure him a peaceful retirement after his abdication towards Napoleon.¹¹ Such strategies tended to indirectly strengthen the Spanish patriotism and the fight against the French enemy.

The state policy of the recognition of war merits after 1814 followed the same pattern.¹² It led to the erasing from the collective memory of any form of friendship with the French.¹³ This was the case with the Spanish soldiers who wished to continue to serve the Spanish army after the war. They had to demonstrate that they had been hardened fighters against the French.¹⁴ Those who had been

(Salamanca: Caja Duero, 2008), 27-29. He quotes: J.W. Ormsby. *An account of the operations of the British Army* (London: Carpenter, 1809).

⁹ Richard Hocquellet, "Una experiencia compleja. La guerra de la independencia a través de la trayectoria de algunos de sus actores", in: *Sombras de mayo. Mitos y memorias de la Guerra de la Independencia en España (1808-1908)* (Madrid: Casa Velázquez, 2007), 45-47.

¹⁰ José María Portillo, "Entre la monarquía y la nación: cortes y constitución en el espacio imperial español", in: J.M. Portillo, X.R. Veiga, M.J. Baz, *A guerra da Independencia e o primeiro liberalismo en España e América* (Santiago de Compostela: Juana de Vega, 2009), 133-137. Raúl Pérez López-

Portillo, *La España de Riego* (Madrid: Sílex, 2005), 223-29.

¹¹ Paradoxically, whereas the studies have increased a lot with the bicentenaries, nowadays that false image is the main predominant in Spain (*which I learned from Jose María Portillo and I want to thank him the following information he gave me*). Conde de Toreno, *Historia del Levantamiento, Guerra y Revolución de España* (1836), edition of Richard Hocquellet (Pamplona: Urigoiti, 2008), Appendix.

¹² María Zozaya, "Entre el secreto privado y la luz pública. La acción de las vicisitudes conmemorativas en el diario personal de un ingeniero", *VIIIth Congress Doceañista, Dos siglos llaman a la puerta* (Cádiz: University, 13 March 2012).

¹³ Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective* (Paris: PUF), 1967.

¹⁴ The patron they had to follow can be summarized on Shakespeare's sentence of Hamlet's: How "to be" a victim and "not to be" a

prisoners of Napoleon were purged and expelled from the army upon their return to Spain. In many cases this was simply because they were suspected of having been contaminated by liberal ideas due to their proximity to French citizens.

Spanish Prisoners of War in France: The Conversion from Enemy to Friend

Among the strategies that influence the perception of an enemy, those of an episode that I have been studying for five years, that of the prisoners may be included. The life they led in France is practically unknown owing to the policy of official concealment, and to the lack of studies about the subject. However, the contact of captivity in France meant that the initial image of the French as the enemy was converted into that of the friend. The experience of several years in that country (1809 to 1814 or 1816) reflects reconciliation and friendship.¹⁵

Whom are we talking about? The reference is to the many prisoners who were taken to France. Gregorio Marañón

coward "The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against sea of troubles, and by opposing end them? William Shakespeare. *Hamlet*, Act III, Scene I.

¹⁵ In my opinion, that positive experience has not always passed the boundaries of the collective memory because it was hidden by the protagonists themselves, fearing censorship. It was especially hidden until Ferdinand VII died, and also this version lasted because the official version wanted to promote nationalism against the French enemy. María Zozaya, "Entre el secreto privado...

calculated that there were 100,000 captives; Jean René Aymes considers that there were at least 50,000. From Zaragoza alone 12,000 prisoners left for France in February 1809¹⁶. This figure reflects an immense number of varied experiences. 10% of these men were isolated in castles, other 10% escaped, but the remainder, 80% were relatively free as to their movements. In my view, at least 50% of them changed their opinion of the French enemy to consider the country a friend.

The sources I base my ideas on are diaries, isolated personal records, and the study of life histories. The main source for this study is the personal diary written by Second Lieutenant José María Román.¹⁷ He and his engineer comrades participated actively in Saragossa's siege (1808-1809). After the Spanish defeat in February 1809, they fell prisoners of the Napoleonic Army. From 1809 to 1814 they were taken to Nancy, and then, in January 1814, to Caudebec. In April some of them fled to Spain, and some others remained in France till 1816, when they returned to Spain. That means an experience of five to seven years in the foreign country, which at the beginning was considered the enemy's.

¹⁶ Jean-René Aymes, *La guerra de la Independencia, 1808-1814: calas y ensayos* (Madrid: CSIC, 2009), 461-62.

¹⁷ María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero José María Román durante la guerra de la Independencia* (Madrid: Lázaro Galdiano, 2008).

But in those years of prison in France multiple social networks of support and friendship were generated between the French and the Spanish. This affection was often originated in the characteristic manner of lodging the captives of the time.¹⁸ They were allocated to a military barracks where they had a certain freedom of movement. They could also choose to live with a local resident who agreed to the arrangement, normally in exchange for compensation in the form of employment. The prisoners were given so much trust that some even acquired a sense of freedom, in my view owing to the ideological emancipation of the comparison with inquisitorial Spain under Ferdinand VII.¹⁹

This was the case of José María Román and several of his colleagues, soldiers and military engineers who had been taken prisoner. They arrived in Nancy in February 1809 and were installed in a military barracks²⁰. As they could move about the town and had intellectual interests (they belonged to a highly qualified elite), they soon began to frequent the university and the public library. From then on, many of them came

into contact with the inhabitants of Nancy, of whom they stressed their friendliness, and went on to occupy a room in their houses, mostly belonging to intellectuals.

As Román himself relates, when he had been in Nancy for two or three days he met Monsieur le Professor Blau in the public library. They began to exchange classes in Spanish and German. On 10th June 1809 he and Lieutenant-Colonel José Navarro²¹ started to live in Monsieur Blau's house, where they continued until April 19th, 1814. During this five-year period they established a very strong academic, working, and friendly relationship. As in the networks of trust typical of modern times,²² the links of friendship led to the establishing of social networks of various kinds.

Let us first consider the academic field. José María Román entered the social circles of the French intellectual elite; his friend Professor Jean Blau allowed him to attend private university classes of physics. Moreover, he introduced him to and brought him into close contact with Monsieur Lamoreux and Monsieur Mollevant, his teachers of the state classes

¹⁸ Gutmaro López, *Crimen y castigo. Cárceles, delito y violencia* (Madrid: UCM, 2003).

¹⁹ María Zozaya, "Prisionero en Libertad", *Experiencia y memoria de la revolución* (Cádiz: Universidad, 2011), 185-87.

²⁰ María Zozaya, "Armas, alimentos, casacas y casernas. Vida cotidiana en tiempo de Guerra y prisión", *Homenaje a Domínguez Ortiz* (Granada: Universidad, forthcoming).

²¹ About him: Mario Sala, *Obelisco histórico en honor...* 152-53.

²² José María Imizcoz "Actores, redes procesos: reflexiones para una historia más global". *Revista da Faculdade de Letras. História V* (2004), 115-40.

of Fine Arts and History.²³ Thanks to the personal networks related to Monsieur Blau he came into contact with the academic milieu and became a member of the social circles of the professors of Nancy.

Jean Blau likewise helped José María Román with his training, teaching him German until he was capable of translating the language. Also, he “insisted on my learning Greek, in which language he gave me many lessons.”²⁴ Thanks to this instruction, twenty years later he wrote a book on Greek grammar. In his introduction to this work he acknowledged the importance of the place where he had been a prisoner in France, when “the luck of arms took me to France as a prisoner from the Plaza de Zaragoza.”²⁵

Secondly, Monsieur Blau also obtained work for Román. The latter related that when in February 1812 the French state reduced prisoners’ pay, “leaving them only able to survive with difficulty,” Blau found him a modest but intense job as copyist of the plans of the land registry. But as this job was not to his liking and occupied all his time “to the detriment of my studies, he found me further work giving Latin classes to

persons of his acquaintance, firstly having me teach his children.”²⁶

As a cause and consequence of all this, thirdly he achieved a close relationship with Jean Blau. On the one hand, he called him “my friend Monsieur Blau.”²⁷ He mentioned that when he said farewell to Professor Blau in January 1814, he was “sure of leaving a true friend in Nancy to whom I will always be grateful.” Moreover, he wrote a few lines about him to express his admiration for his many human, religious, and scientific qualities:

Albeit with the appearance of a simple man, Monsieur Blau combines the good qualities of his soul with very solid learning his knowledge of the Greek language is deep and that of Latin, German, and Greek extremely extensive; he has vast erudition and complete knowledge of ancient geography, antiquity, etcetera. A true Christian and the loving father of a large family, to whom he gives an excellent education; a teacher who watches over his disciples and does everything possible to place his friends, Monsieur Blau is one of the most estimable men that can be

²³ María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero...*, 99-102.

²⁴ María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero...*, 99.

²⁵ José María Román, *Nueva gramática griega* (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1832) I, I.

²⁶ María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero...*, 102.

²⁷ María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero...*, 103.

found, and it is impossible to know him without loving him.²⁸

These links of affection with short or long-term employment ramifications may well have been repeated with other prisoners. In this case they were also sealed with very strong family links that were far-reaching for the time, i.e. those of Román being the godfather in the Catholic faith of Monsieur Blau's youngest daughter, Anne Marie Madeleine, as is recorded in the Nancy registry office.²⁹ Román wrote in his diary:

During my stay at the house five of Blau's children were born, which in addition to the six he already had made for a large family [...]. I was the godfather of the youngest daughter, born in January 1813: and my true godsons in affection were my disciple José, Adolfo, the first I saw born at the house, and the next son, Félix.³⁰

This attitude of collaboration, friendship, and fraternity (which in my opinion could have been a result of

Masonic links),³¹ was maintained by the next person who lodged Román after he was deported again. On 5th January 1814 he and his companions left Nancy for Caudebec, in Normandy. Upon his arrival on 7th February, Román was lodged at the home of Monsieur Le Sage, to whom he later declared that he "owed many favours" because of the exemplary way he was treated. A strong friendship grew up between the two men and Monsieur Le Sage helped his guest in any way he could. This friendship also took the form of protection, which was extended to Román's companions even at the expense of the host's own safety. This was shown when the order was given for the prisoners to leave for Caen on 2nd April. Given that the allies had already taken Paris, Monsieur Le Sage "insisted on keeping him in hiding at his home until a final decision was taken. When it was pointed out to him that I could not be separated from my friends, he was generous enough to have them stay also."³² Monsieur Le Sage's life would have been at risk had he been discovered sheltering them, which reveals

²⁸ María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero...*, 102.

²⁹ Her name was Anne Marie Madeleine, and in the document Roman was described as a prisoner: "*Joseph Marie Roman, officier du génie espagnol, prisonnier de guerre, en dépôt en cette ville, âgé de 28 ans*". Archives Departementales de Meurthe et Moselle, Civil Registry office of Nancy, France, 5 January 1813. *I am very grateful to Odile Bouchut (CDN) who found this document and transcribed me the information.*

³⁰ María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero...*, 102-03.

³¹ Freemasons used to sign with three points (meaning the brotherhood) or equivalents, like three lines. Napoleon legalized masonry, so at that time was not dangerous either to share that kind of sociability or to speak about the spirit of liberty or fraternity. When Blau signed in the National Registry office of Nancy to register the birth of her daughter, we notice that distinctive masonic mark. Archives Departementales de Meurthe et Moselle, Nancy, 5 January 1813.

³² María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero...*, 123.

a high degree of union, friendship, and ideological proximity. His protection also included financial support, such as when in April they escaped towards Paris and:

When the generous Monsieur Le Sage realised that I had no money, he obliged me to accept eight Louis d'or coins for the journey. For all these favours and the excellent treatment I was given at his home I will be eternally grateful to him, and also to his wife and brother.³³

Such references reflect the union and the support that existed between some of these prisoners and the inhabitants of the city where they were sent. They coincide with multiple declarations collected by Jean René Aymes regarding the deportees, and likewise with the private records of prisoners such as Sergeant Braulio Foz, who was held between 1810 and 1814 in Wassy, in the Haute-Marne district. He coped very well there owing to the freedom of movement he was given and the kindness of the locals. He learned Greek and pedagogical techniques that he would later bring to Spain in the form of various publications. At the end of the war he mentioned that the French saw him leave “with great regret.”³⁴ Foz left this direct account of the

friendship that arose; it can be inferred that in the case of other prisoners (especially in the case of learned men) such as José Ezpeleta in Montpellier, the marquis of Amarillas, Joaquín Blake in Saumur, after being in Chateau de Vincennes, or José Cortines Espinosa de los Monteros, who would later be a member of the Legion D'Honneur,³⁵ this good treatment and these positive relations also existed.

A Friendship that had to Remain Concealed

In these periods of captivity in France the general lack of a feeling of enmity with the French is clear. When it did exist it was justified by unfair or violent behaviour, normally on the part of the military leaders. The feeling of friendship and support was in general reciprocal between the French and their Spanish prisoners. However, this vision could not be spread on the return of the latter to Spain. If this account of union and friendship had been heard of in Spain in 1814, it would have classed as suspicious

³³ María Zozaya, *Viaje y prisión del Ingeniero...*, 123.

³⁴ Jacques Ballesté “Algunos aspectos de la influencia francesa en la vida y obra de Braulio Foz (1791-1865)”, Jean-René Aymes; Javier Fernández Sebastián (Coords), *La imagen de Francia...*, 153-54.

³⁵ Francisco Borja Medina, *José de Ezpeleta, Gobernador de la Mobila* (Sevilla: CSIC-EEHA, 1980), LXVII-LXIX. Archives Nationales site de Paris; Fonds de la Légion d'honneur aux archives nationales; Commandeur de l'ordre Royal de la Légion d'honneur : LH/596/36, 8 Janvier 1841. Pedro Agustín Girón, *Recuerdos (1778-1837)* (Navarra: Universidad, 1981), II. Nicolás Benavides, *El capitán General don Joaquín Blake Joyes* (Madrid: TSGE, 1960), 509-10. Se also: Jean-René Aymes, *La guerra de la Independencia...*, 470-73.

and pro-French. It would have been treason because of alliance with the country of the enemy, which meant the matter was silenced.

The contrast between personal experience and the official version is very revealing of the need to keep this memory of alliance hidden. None of this personal experience of union with the French narrated by José María Román in his private diary was recorded in official sources. In military reports, the period of captivity was summed up in a mere sentence. Román mentioned “he was a prisoner from 2nd May of the year mentioned until late May 1814.”³⁶ Likewise, in his request for a cross for war merits in 1816, he argued that he had “the medal that was granted to the prisoners who fled the depots in France.”³⁷ In other words, these official references did not mention the experience in France and therefore the friendship generated with the French was silenced. In this sense it is revealing that the cross was not granted until 1821 during Spain’s Liberal period (1820-23).

“Deconstructing the Enemy”

That is what I call the next stage in the relation of friendship generated between the Spanish captives and French citizens, when the latter took matters a step further. They considered the

³⁶ Archivo General Militar de Segovia [AGMS]: Legajo R.2757, n° 28514.

³⁷ AMZ: 28-1/79 (11), 1821-1822.

Spaniards’ cause to be a just one in contrast to that of Napoleon, which was ruining the French economy and depleting its inhabitants by calling them to arms. They treated them as equals and with their actions condemned Napoleon’s imperial attitude. They joined forces with the Spaniards and supported them economically, intellectually and from an employment point of view. It seems that they themselves considered Napoleon to be the enemy and the Spanish prisoners to be their friends. Braulio Foz mentioned how they had tears in their eyes when he left. They supported José María Román and his companions with daily acts of kindness, and gave them provisions or money on their departure. They concealed him and his companions to enable them to escape from the next prison decided by Napoleon, risking their lives to do so (in what could be considered a variant of the Stockholm syndrome). As well as with this practical help, on occasions they supported their cause in writing as they considered it a just one.

That was the official point of one of the most outstanding members of Nancy’s Academy, the “Société Royale des Sciences, Lettres et Arts,” in the Public Session 14th August 1814. While reporting obituaries, Professor Monsieur Lamoureux made a digression about the common utility of the public libraries. Then, he spoke about the “Spanish prisoners in Nancy” (although they had already left

the 4th January 1814). He recognized their value and honour and the injustice of the Peninsular War:

Brave Spaniards [...]; to whom our hospitable city hastened to offer not only the solace that valiant misfortune deserves, but also all facilities to satisfy the most noble of passions, that of learning; [our library and university was for you] a refuge that was always open to help you forget the injustices of fortune!³⁸

This affirmation, together with the protective attitude of the French who concealed or supported the prisoners, reveals the lack of hatred between French and Spanish military men and intellectuals. What is more, their cause was supported because it was considered just, and the attitude of the state towards them unjust. Because of this, union was achieved in a process that could be referred to as the deconstruction of the enemy, in which the French were seen as friends—and the Spaniards to the French—as they themselves disagreed with the measures of the Napoleonic state.

Conclusions: imprecise limits of the enemy

We have studied a part of the history that has not been much studied until now: That of prisoners. We have analysed how the French enemy became a friend in the eyes of the Spanish prisoner. Likewise, the French themselves considered the war planned by Napoleon to be unjust and helped the Spaniards. In many cases they defended this idea with both word and action, establishing multiple networks with the prisoners. They supported the latter materially and symbolically, lodging them in their houses and befriending them in libraries and universities.

Unfortunately the attitude of concealing these alliances to favour transnational strife has prevailed right up to the present day. Historiography has ignored the union between the French and the Spaniards because it was in opposition to a nationalist and patriotic view of history. However, future research will begin to fill this wide gulf, which was perpetrated by a war at European level with its conciliatory stories.

³⁸ *Bulletin of the « Société Royale des Sciences, Lettres et Arts »* (Nancy: SRSLA, 1816-1818), 19-20.

PONIATOWSKI IN 1813

by John Stanley

Throughout his fifty-one years, Poniatowski's eventful life paralleled Polish tumultuous history, but his final year—1813—was its apex, when his life and death became a myth situated in the dilemma that faced Poniatowski during this year: The conflict between his ideal of loyalty and his love of country. A man of the *ancien régime*, imbued with notions of honor and of keeping's one's oath, in 1813 he lived in a transformed world, where determining Poland's best option for survival became paramount in the minds of many Polish leaders. During this final year of his life, he reorganized a Polish army from the detritus of the retreat from Moscow while gaining Napoleon's admiration, but he also faced humiliation at the hands of allies and colleagues. Only in death did he become a focus for national unity.

Born in Vienna in 1763 to an aristocratic family, his uncle Stanisław August became king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth a year later. The prince lost his father when he was only ten years old; the king provided not only for the young man's material needs, but also his education. Although Poniatowski served in the Austrian army from 1780-89, Stanisław August's influence linked Poniatowski to Poland,

rather than to the Habsburgs. The prince responded to the king's wish that he join the Polish army, becoming a major-general. During the Russo-Polish war of 1792, he was made a commander against his wishes and enjoyed a first success at the battle at Zieleńcy on 18 June, when he personally led his troops into battle, bringing praise and instilling self-confidence. When the king switched sides during the war, Poniatowski resigned his commission and went abroad, but returned to Warsaw to fight in the Kościuszko Uprising of 1795. After the Russians conquered Warsaw, Poniatowski initially remained, but his estates were confiscated and he was ordered to leave. He returned to Vienna, but when his uncle died in St Petersburg, he travelled for the funeral and was warmly received by the new Russian emperor, Paul I, who hoped to win over the Poles: He returned Poniatowski's estates and allowed him to return to Warsaw, where the prince had inherited a palace, Pod Błachą. Although Paul I had attempted to recruit Poniatowski and appoint him to a position in the Russian army, the prince refused, pleading poor health.

While in Warsaw, the prince avoided politics, restricting himself to Masonic rituals and riotous womanising.

However, when the Prussians abandoned Warsaw in November 1806, Poniatowski was made provisional commander of the city. After handing over power to the French, he was soon courted by Murat. His public announcement of support for the French led the Polish aristocracy to support Napoleon in the First Polish War (1806-07). Although commander of a division and war director in the provisional Polish government, Poniatowski played little role in the war itself, but was made minister of war in the newly established Duchy of Warsaw. In 1809 he proved himself as a military commander in defending the duchy at the battle of Raszyn, outside Warsaw, and invading Austrian-occupied Galicia. In 1812, he commanded the V corps of the *Grande Armée* during the Second Polish War.¹

¹ There are numerous biographies of the prince, but none in English. Among the most important are S.K. Bogusławski, *Życie Księcia Józefa Poniatowskiego naczelnego wodza wojsk polskich, marszałka państwa francuskiego* (Warsaw, 1831); Franciszek Paszkowski, *Książę Józef Poniatowski* (Cracow, 1898); Szymon Askenazy, *Książę Józef Poniatowski*. (Warsaw, 1905, with many subsequent Polish editions as well as translations into French and German); Bronisław Pawłowski, *Książę Józef Poniatowski w setną rocznicę zgonu bohatera* (Lwów, 1913); Adam Mieczysław Skalkowski, *Książę Józef Poniatowski*. (Bytom, 1913); Stanisław Aleksander Boleścić-Kozłowski, *Józef książę Poniatowski iród jego: studjum historyczne* (Poznań, 1923); Karol Koźmiński, *Książę Józef Poniatowski*. (Warsaw, 1967); Robert Bielecki, *Książę Józef Poniatowski*. (Warsaw, 1974); Jerzy Skowronek, *Książę Józef Poniatowski*. (Wrocław, 1984); and Andrzej Kaćperski, *Książę Józef Poniatowski i jego epoka* (Gliwice, 2013).

The results of that 1812 campaign frame Poniatowski's final year. During the retreat from Moscow, in early November 1812, Poniatowski fell off his horse during a reconnaissance, twisted his leg, and could not remount. He was too weak to remain as commander of the V corps and left for Warsaw, reached in early December. The remnants of the V corps arrived in duchy's capital a few weeks later, on 28 December 1812: 4 generals, 120 officers, and 220 soldiers.² However, the corps had managed to save all of its regimental eagles.³ It also had preserved one of the few remaining cavalry regiments, consisting of 500 horses.⁴ In addition, the survivors brought out the corps' fifty canons, among the few guns saved from the retreat.⁵ When the

² Józef Poniatowski, *Correspondance du prince Joseph Poniatowski avec la France* [*Korespondencya księcia Józefa Poniatowskiego z Francją*], Adam M. Skalkowski, ed., (Poznań, 1929), vol. IV: 306; Marcelli Handelsman, *Napoleon a Polska* (Warsaw, 1914), pp. 143-4; Adam M. Skalkowski, *O część imienia polskiego* (Lwów, 1908), 31, gives their number as 600, while the US ambassador to France estimated the figure as 1,000. Charles Burr Todd, *Life and Letters of Joel Barlow* (New York, 1886), p. 281. Niemcewicz recalls that the duchy's treasury immediately gave the survivors two months' salary. Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki czasów moich* (Warsaw, 1957), I: 410.

³ Niemcewicz, I: 410-11.

⁴ On 25 December 1812, General François Bourcier had written to Berthier about the need to the incorporate this cavalry regiment – one of the few capable to fight. Bourcier to Berthier, Elbląg, 25 December 1812, cited in Robert Bielski, *Napoleon a Polska* [*Napoléon et la Pologne*] (Warsaw, 1997), 125, #4.

⁵ Bielski, 28.

horses had died and been eaten, the men themselves pulled their artillery.

The remnants of the V Corps were led to Poniatowski's Warsaw palace, where the prince was convalescing. Poniatowski could not walk to the courtyard; he was carried there. As soon as their commander appeared, the soldiers crowded around him, depositing their eagles at his feet, assuring him their honor was secure.⁶ They swore to Poniatowski, "We'll fight on, we'll be revenged.... We will follow you, even into hell." Prince Józef's face revealed tears; he could hardly speak.⁷ None of the troops had warm clothes or even shoes. The prince gave out as much money as he had on hand in the palace and served an impromptu meal in the courtyard, accompanied by champagne. The troops still suffered from bloody diarrhea and bad nerves; typhoid appeared among them as did hepatitis.⁸

Of the 100,000 Polish troops provided to Napoleon and scattered among numerous corps, over 70,000 were lost in the Russian campaign. In a report to the Council of State, Poniatowski did not hesitate to say that the V corps was for all practical purposes destroyed and

⁶ Anna Potocka, *Mémoires (1794–97 1820)* (Paris, 2005, reprint of the 10th edition, 1911; originally published in 1897), 340.

⁷ Teodor Morawski, *Dzieje narodu polskiego w krótkości zebrane*, vol. VI: *Polska pod obcym panowaniem*, 2nd ed. (Poznań, 1877), 165.

⁸ Józef Jaszowski, *Pamiętnik dowódcy rakienników konnych*, Jerzy Łojek, ed. (Warsaw, 1968), 92.

that the small number of men returning from Russia possessed only their honor and their continuing dedication.⁹

Following Napoleon's direction, Poniatowski as the duchy's minister of war and commander in chief of the Polish army, began to raise a new force while the duchy's government sought to gather supplies and equipment. In January 1813, the Council of Ministers called its own *levée en masse*, at Napoleon's express instruction given during his short stay in Warsaw. There were, however, no boots, uniforms, or arms. The retreating Austrian and Saxon troops pulled back to the Bug, ostensibly to save their troops from losses, while seizing all available supplies and horses in the departments they occupied, provisions carefully assembled by the duchy's government. Poniatowski faced a huge challenge. As he wrote to the French minister of war, the Polish regiments had to be entirely reconstituted as a result of their losses during the Second Polish War.¹⁰ The duchy's finances were depleted and he could not count on France providing even the 1812 level of financial support for the Polish military.

Despite this difficult situation, Poniatowski had immediately ordered a reorganization of the armed forces. On 1 January 1813, the total strength of Poniatowski's V corps reached 18,974 men

⁹ Askenazy, 268.

¹⁰ Poniatowski to Clarke, Warsaw, 13 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 23.

(including those in hospital) and 5,598 horses.¹¹ These troops were concentrated in and near Warsaw.¹² The levy of 25,000 conscripts was in full swing, although the three eastern departments—Łomża, Siedlce, and Lublin—were occupied by the Russians. The work on the fortress at Modlin continued; Jean-Baptiste Mallet, the commander of the duchy's combat engineers, sought the return of the Polish sapper companies from the other corps where they served in order to hasten the work.¹³ A distinct artillery division was organized.¹⁴

¹¹ The duchy's army consisted of 7,538 infantry troops, commanded by 306 officers. From these figures, six officers and 810 soldiers were in hospital. Only 52 officers and 97 soldiers had horses. For the cavalry, there were 5,513 soldiers and 255 officers. The soldiers had only 4,094 horses, but the officers had 560. Five officers and 224 cavalymen were in hospital. In addition, in the artillery there were 98 officers and 755 soldiers; the artillery officers had 206 horses, their troops 258. In hospital, there 27 artillerymen and 1 officer. Finally, the Zamość fortress was garrisoned by the duchy's troops: 675 officers and 3,271 soldiers with 223 horses. The battalion of military equipment consisted of 165 men, including 13 officers, but 40 soldiers were in hospital. "Stan wojska polskiego 1 stycznia 1813," Poniatowski, V: 2, #733. Skalkowski derives these numbers from the Archives historique de la Guerre.

¹² Poniatowski to Reynier, Warsaw, 2 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 5, #734.

¹³ The 1st and 2nd company of sappers were attached to the IX Corps at Kwidzyn while the 4th company was attached to Macdonald's X corps. Mallet to Poniatowski, Warsaw, 5 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 19, #1.

¹⁴ Wielhorski to Lajard, 11 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 2-3, #1.

Napoleon granted extraordinary plenipotentiary authority to Prince Józef on 7 January 1813.¹⁵ Frederick August, king of Saxony and duke of Warsaw, followed up with a royal decree giving the war minister broad authority.¹⁶ In mid-January, Poniatowski desperately wrote straight to Napoleon seeking prompt funding to give life to his organizational plans, even singling out the particular officers who needed to replace their equipment lost in Russia.¹⁷ He also reported that the Russian were much diminished in number and disorganized, based on the available intelligence. With a firm defense, Poniatowski believed that it would be possible to maintain a line on the Vistula until the duchy's army was strong enough to go on the offensive.¹⁸ The V corps commander, however, did not receive support from Murat, commander of

¹⁵ Napoleon I to Maret, Paris, 7 January 1813, Napoleon I, *Correspondance de Napoléon I^{er} publiée par l'ordre de l'Empereur Napoléon III* (Paris, 1868), XXIV: 372, #19426.

¹⁶ The Minister of War was by force of circumstance the most important figure in the government and he was given extensive powers by a royal decree of 18 January 1813. Bielski, 28.

¹⁷ "Songez, Sire, que chaque instant perdu peut être non seulement une perte irréparable pour les ressources que peuvent encore offrir les restes de ce pays, mais même anéantir l'effet de Vos premiers bienfaits." Poniatowski was not following protocol in writing straight to the emperor; he sought Napoleon's pardon. Poniatowski to Napoleon I, January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 1, #732. Skalkowski believes that it was sent on 17 January 1813. Poniatowski, I, #1.

¹⁸ Poniatowski to Davout, Warsaw, 17 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 32, #762.

the *Grande Armée* after Napoleon left for Paris in December 1812. Poniatowski pleaded for information on the *Grande Armée's* direction and operations so that he could co-ordinate his own actions with the French. He also emphasized to the demoralized Murat that given the weak Russian pressure it would not be necessary to abandon the duchy.¹⁹ He never received a response from the king of Naples. Only on 20 January did he learn that Murat had transferred command to Prince Eugene.²⁰

Poniatowski still hoped to hold the Vistula line as did Davout, but to maintain this position Schwarzenberg and Reynier would have to remain on the Vistula's right bank. The Polish prince did not believe that the Russians had the strength to push beyond a Vistula defence line. Even if they did,

¹⁹ Poniatowski to Murat, Warsaw, 17 January 2013, Poniatowski, V: 34-35, #763.

²⁰ Poniatowski to Davout, Warsaw, 20 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 39, #766. The *Grande Armée* learned of the transfer in an order of the day issued by Berthier in Poznań on 16 January 1813.

Schwarzenberg and Reynier could easily retreat through Modlin and Warsaw. If the force of 35,000 troops currently on the Vistula's right bank were kept there, they would force the Russians to exercise

caution in advancing toward Prussia, since this new force would threaten their left flank, forcing them away from the Vistula. At the least, the Russians would require an observation force, pulling troops away from any advance.²¹ Fearing a Russian onslaught, Prince Eugene paid no attention to Prince Józef's pleas: The French retreated west, first to Poznań and then to the Odra River, exposing Schwarzenberg's Austrian corps, which

retreated to the left bank, and alarming Polish public opinion.

However, the Austrians had no intention of protecting the duchy. Instead of supporting Prince Eugene by withdrawing west, Schwarzenberg's

²¹ Poniatowski to Davout, Warsaw, 20 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 39-41, #766.



movements took his corps south, further from the *Grande Armée* while leaving the duchy itself exposed to an enemy which did not even have numerical superiority over the combined forces of Poles, Saxons, and Austrians. After Prince Eugene's withdrawal, only the fortresses at Gdańsk, Grudziądz, and Toruń remained unoccupied in the north.²² Poniatowski put on a brave face to his king, noting that the situation was dangerous, but that it had no effect on the Polish military's position in the centre.²³ Until the situation improved, the population would necessarily fear a Russian occupation; Poniatowski could only count on the army for support, but it required extraordinary and immediate assistance to fulfill its role.²⁴

Despite the duchy's terrible losses and its financial state, Poniatowski managed to raise an army of 25,000 in 1813, a restoration termed miraculous.²⁵ Equally important was the proud spirit that he instilled in the troops. Nonetheless, it was clear that Warsaw had become an untenable military position. Without Austrian and Saxon troop support, Poniatowski simply did not have sufficient

numbers to stop the Russian advance which began on 9 January 1813. At a conference in mid-January, Poniatowski used harsh words with Schwarzenberg, a Vienna acquaintance, decrying his continual withdrawal in the face of a weaker Russian force. Prince Józef indicated to Prince Eugene that if the Vistula line were abandoned, he would position his Polish troops between Kalisz and Częstochowa, moving in concert with Reynier's Saxon troops, near enough to the Odra and the French garrison at Głogów, in Lower Silesia, for support.²⁶

Even before Kutuzov's advance, the Austrians were pulling back, undermining Poniatowski's hope to confront the Russians in the duchy. By 4 January, Poniatowski complained to Davout that Schwarzenberg had simply abandoned territory to the enemy. Due to such maneuvers, the duchy lost human resources as well as horses, supplies, and wagons on most of the right bank of the Vistula as well as raising alarm among the duchy's inhabitants. Moreover, Cossacks now pillaged villages.²⁷ To Poniatowski's request for assistance, Schwarzenberg and Reynier responded that they would not defend Warsaw but would pull back to the

²² Berthier to Davout, Poznań, 15 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 36, #2.

²³ Poniatowski to Frederick August, 18 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 38, #764.

²⁴ Poniatowski to Maret, Warsaw, 18 January 2013, Poniatowski, V: 36-37, #764.

²⁵ For additional details, see Mariusz Łukasiewicz, *Armia księcia Józefa 1813* (Warsaw, 1986),

²⁶ Poniatowski to Prince Eugene, Warsaw, 21 January 201, Poniatowski, V: 47, #769.

²⁷ Poniatowski to Davout, Warsaw, 4 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 9-11; The V corps commander repeated these complaints to his sovereign. Poniatowski to Frederick August, Poniatowski, V: 11-13.

left bank of the Vistula, using the river as their defense line.²⁸ Reynier noted that his cavalry was too weak to guard an extended operational line and he faced Sacken's corps of between 8,000 and 10,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry, which had reached Brest. Poniatowski did not accept this estimate. Based on discussions with the Austrians, Poniatowski estimated the Russian cavalry at 2,500.²⁹ Poniatowski learned from two Polish soldiers who had escaped Russian captivity that there were few regular Russian troops, although numerous Cossacks.³⁰ In his estimate, such a force hardly proved a threat to Schwarzenberg.

The Austrians slowly beat a leisurely retreat south towards Galicia, rather than west to Kalisz, where they could maintain contact with the *Grande Armée*. It was clear to Schwarzenberg that the Russians were consciously avoiding battle with the Austrian corps. Reynier also noticed that the Russians treated gingerly the Austrian corps.³¹ Schwarzenberg also remarked on the respect that the Russians showed the Poles; Alexander I still hoped to reach an

understanding with the duchy's government. Schwarzenberg admitted that the Russians were not strong enough to attack his army, but as the Austrians withdrew from territory, the Russians quickly occupied it.³² Poniatowski confessed that the ever smaller area occupied by French, Austrian, Saxon, and Polish troops led to supply challenges.³³ He alerted Berthier to the positions of the Polish and Lithuanian troops under his command positioned throughout the unoccupied portion of the Duchy.³⁴ The Polish prince admitted that he would have liked to concentrate his troops, but was restricted by the available food supplies in

²⁸ Poniatowski to Berthier, Warsaw, 3 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 6, #735.

²⁹ Reynier to Poniatowski, Warsaw, 3 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 7-8, #1.

³⁰ Although escapees, the soldiers were treated well by Cossacks and Russian regular troops who shared food with them and allowed them to ride with them toward the duchy. Poniatowski, V: 9, #1.

³¹ Reynier to Murat, 16 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 11, #6.

³² Schwarzenberg to Francis I, Warsaw, 3 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 10-11, #1.

³³ Poniatowski to Davout, Warsaw, 9 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 15-17; and Poniatowski to Berthier, Warsaw, 9 January 1813, Poniatowski, V: 171-8, #742.

³⁴ The 1st infantry regiment was in Warsaw, the 2nd infantry in Kalisz, the 3rd in Warsaw, the 6th in Sandomierz, the 8th in Częstochowa, the 12th in Cracow, the 13th in Zamość, the 14th in Piotrków, the 15th in Jędrzejów, the 16th in Radom, the 17th in Łowicz, the 18th in Kazuń, Małocice, and Łomna, the 20th at Modlin, Czerwińsk, and Wyszogród, and the 21st at Nowodwór and Praga. The last three regiments formed the garrisons of Modlin and Prague. The 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, 10th, and 11th infantry regiments served under French command.

Poniatowski's cavalry were also scattered: the 1st regiment at Końskie, the 2nd at Warta, the 3rd at Sieradz, the 4th, at radomsk, the 5th at Rawa, the 6th at Nowe Miasta on the Pilica, the 7th at Plock, the 8th at Łęczycza, the 10th at Koziennice, the 11th at Solec, the 12th at Staszów, the 13th at Opatów, the 14th at Nowe Miasta near Korczyn, the 15th at Warsaw, the 16th at Kielce, the 18th at Piaseczno, and the 20th at Grojec. "Emplacement des troupes polonaises et lithuaniennes dans le Duché de Varsovie," Poniatowski, V: 17-18, #1.

each locality and the presence of Schwarzenberg's and Reynier's troops. No single location could meet the needs of all the contingents

On 22 January 1807, Schwarzenberg received the order from Vienna to evacuate the duchy.³⁵ Schwarzenberg warned the duchy's council of ministers that he would not defend the city in the face of a superior force, claiming the advance of a Russian army of 180,000. In fact, it was the Russian advance guard of no more than 30,000 troops that was approaching and it was in poor shape.³⁶ In early February, Schwarzenberg was verbally told that Vienna had reached an understanding with the Russians.³⁷ Reynier had already pointed out that Schwarzenberg's movements exposed the fortress at Modlin to siege. The fort's commandant informed Poniatowski that the Austrian light cavalry had not prevented the Russians from coming up to the fort's ramparts.³⁸

³⁵ Модест Иванович Богданович, *Исторія Царствованія Императора Александра I и Россіи въ его время*, (С.-Петербургъ, 1869) III: 474.

³⁶ The English military attaché with the Russian forces recalled that "the possession of Warsaw is entirely due to diplomacy. The military means of obtaining the city did not exist." Sir Robert Wilson, *Private Diary of Travels, Personal Services, and Public Events...in the Campaigns of 1812, 1813, 1814*. (London, 1861), vol. I: 278.

³⁷ Czotek to Metternich, Vienna, 8 February 1813, PoniatowskiI: V: 60-63, #3.

³⁸ Poniatowski to Reynier, Warsaw, 30 January 1812, Poniatowski, V: 60, #778.

The seeming abandonment of the Poles by the *Grande Armée* in January 1813—when Prince Eugene abandoned the Vistula defense line—had shaken public opinion in the Duchy.³⁹ The Russian armies reached the Vistula on 31 January and even some government ministers now supported collaboration with the Russians. The duchy's government only needed to remain in Warsaw until the Russians occupied the city when an understanding could be reached with the Russian emperor. Indeed, Alexander I ordered his troops to hold back in order to give time for negotiations with the duchy's government, but Poniatowski would not change sides. Instead, at a meeting of the Council of Ministers, he demanded the government's transfer from Warsaw: As a result of Austrian behavior, the prince believed it was no longer possible to defend the city. The government left its capital on 1 February.⁴⁰ Poniatowski's army evacuated Warsaw on 6 February; the next day Schwarzenberg's Austrians also left and Miloradovich's advance Russian guard entered Warsaw on 7 February. By mid-February all of central Poland was in Russian hands as Schwarzenberg continued his orderly withdrawal to the south. The prince could have withdrawn to the Vistula's left bank, carrying out diversionary skirmishes with the Russians, but Poniatowski was not willing to risk losing his entire army, although Napoleon

³⁹ Poniatowski, IV: pp. 313-4; V: 26-7.

⁴⁰ Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki*, I: 428.

would surely have welcomed any diversion behind Prussian lines and against the Russians. Poniatowski aimed to keep his small, painfully reconstituted army together.

Poniatowski and 8,000 troops initially left for Kalisz, but when the small army reached this western city, it quickly became clear that its position would not be secure. Polish soldiers could hear artillery fire as Reynier's Saxons fought with the Allies. When he learned that Poznań would also be evacuated and Reynier would be forced to abandon Kalisz, Poniatowski feared that Prince Eugene would abandon all of the duchy's territory. Poniatowski no longer believed that he could reach the French fortress at Głogów without being cut off by the Russians troops pressing hard on it. He therefore changed direction, identifying Częstochowa as the army's new base.⁴¹ Poniatowski marched his troops there, but this position was not stable either. The duchy's army was now near Silesia and Saxony. Poniatowski might have retreated toward the French positions on the Elbe, but he was determined to keep his small army on Polish soil: he spurred his troops on toward Cracow, where the duchy's government had taken up position. The troops reached the ancient Polish capital on 20 February.

⁴¹ Poniatowski to Prince Eugene, Rusiec, 14 February 1813, Poniatowski, V: 81-82, #791.

Even after the government's seat had moved to Cracow, there were intrigues. There were ongoing conflicts between the members of the General Confederacy—proclaimed in 1812—and the duchy's government. Of the seven members of the Confederation's council, four were pro-Russian (Stanisław Kostka Zamoyski, Jan Klemens Gołaszewski, Aleksander Linowski, and Marcin Badeni) as well as the council's secretary Kajetan Koźmian.⁴² Linowski, also a state counsellor, urged the government to return to Warsaw and pleaded with Poniatowski to return with the army to the capital.

The ministers themselves were torn between Napoleon and Alexander I. The duchy's powerful finance minister, Tadeusz Matuszewicz, kept up secret discussions with the Russians. On 15 March, the pro-Russian ministers wrote to Alexander, promising to keep the duchy's army neutral but desiring the reconstitution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth under Grand Duke Michael or at least an imperial viceroy, a 100,000-man army, the Constitution of 3 May 1791, and the Lithuanian Statute of 1588 as law—a rejection of Napoleonic reforms.⁴³ The Russian emperor seemed open to an armistice and sent Józef Kalasanty Szaniawski, a former Polish Jacobin, to Cracow, where he arrived on 21 April, hoping to encourage co-operation

⁴² Morawski, VI: 175.

⁴³ Morawski, VI: 174.

with Alexander I.⁴⁴ Other emissaries also came from Russian-occupied Warsaw as well as from Berlin, for Prussia had now turned against Napoleon. For example, Antoni Radziwiłł, an old friend of Poniąkowski and married to a Hohenzollern, came to Cracow during April to try and convince the War Minister to change his mind.⁴⁵ Instead of a welcome, Radziwiłł was placed under arrest by the French resident Bignon.⁴⁶

Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, the former Russian foreign minister, was also active in these maneuvers. Through his sister, Zofia Zamoyska, he contacted Poniąkowski on 16 April, trying to convince him to conclude an armistice with Russia as Alexander had noted in conversation with him while in Kalisz. Czartoryski sent a long letter to Poniąkowski, relaying the contents of a discussion between Prince Adam and the Russian emperor in Kalisz. He cautioned Poniąkowski against the Austrians and the dissolution of the Polish army. He urged Poniąkowski to rely on Alexander I and asking him to sign a secret armistice with the Russians. He advised that the

government and army should remain in Cracow until an understanding with the Russians was reached.⁴⁷

While Poniąkowski as war minister held the key to any armistice, the prince did not trust Alexander I and feared that an armistice would leave his troops at the Russians' mercy. He responded to Linowski's suggestion by indicating that the confederation and the government could do what they wished, but the army was under Napoleon's order: he would listen only to his commander.⁴⁸ He would not agree to a pact with Alexander I: "I will not accept the best founded hopes if they are bought at the price of dishonor."⁴⁹ Consequently, Szaniawski fled back to Warsaw; Radziwiłł departed Cracow after being released from prison. The duchy's government and army remained in Cracow.

The Polish leadership now fought among itself. Recriminations and accusations flew throughout the government. Matuszewicz, supported by fellow ministers Ignacy Sobolewski (police) and Tadeusz Mostowski (internal affairs), now attempted to get around Poniąkowski by encouraging mass resignations from serving officers. There were some who responded to this strategy, but there was no wave of mass resignations. When the

⁴⁴ Morawski, VI: 175.

⁴⁵ Franciszek Wężyk, *Poezye z pośmiertnych rękopisów* (Cracow, 1878), II: 360.

⁴⁶ Luise Radziwiłł, *Quarante-cinq années de ma vie (1770 à 1815)* (Paris, 1911), 339-40; Potocka, 349; Antoni Jan Ostrowski, *Żywot Tomasza Ostrowskiego, ministra Rzeczypospolitej później Prezesa Senatu Księstwa Warszawskiego i Królestwa Polskiego, oraz Rys wypadków krajowych od 1763 r. do 1817* (Paris, 1836) II: 338.

⁴⁷ Askenazy, 276-77.

⁴⁸ Kajetan Koźmian, *Pamiętniki* (Wrocław, 1972) II: 102.

⁴⁹ Potocka, 348.

pro-Russian Prince Aleksander Sapieha left for his Volhynia estates without permission and without resigning his military functions, the government was divided in its response. Some ministers, supported by Bignon, wanted to try him for desertion. The state councillors in the pro-Russian camp, however, argued that a trial was not appropriate since Sapieha reported to Prince Poniatowski and not the council. Summoned to the council meeting, Poniatowski rejected a trial and the matter was dropped.⁵⁰ The war minister had no intention of sullyng his hands in the matter, further dividing the Polish leadership.

The Prince's decision to retreat to Cracow, instead of marching west, had kept the Duchy's existence alive a few months longer. Some French generals advocated dissolving the Polish units, incorporating them into French divisions.⁵¹ Instead, Poniatowski continued to strengthen his small force, successfully raising more troops. The *levée en masse* in Cracow department went well: from the

department's peasant recruits, the famed Cracow light cavalry (*krakusy*) were formed. These squadrons became renowned for their courage and endurance; Napoleon termed them his "Polish Cossacks."⁵² Five hundred Lithuanian troops took refuge in Cracow as did a Saxon brigade. Soldiers and officers who had recovered from illness or wounds also made their way to Cracow. A battalion of French troops released from hospital joined the Poles.⁵³ In spite of the Russian occupation, Poles from other departments continued to cross the Russian line and join Poniatowski's army. Neither Greater Poland nor Lesser Poland's noblemen, however, joined the army. Poniatowski now found himself with an army consisting of 764 officers and 15,402 soldiers, who were armed and uniformed thanks only to the efforts of the Poles' old friend Maret.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Maciej Mycielski, *Marcin Badeni (1751 – 1824): Kuriera kontuszonego ministra* (Warsaw, 1994) 72-78.

⁵¹ Marshal Berthier, for example, sought to liquidate the Fifth Polish Corps after the retreat from Moscow, incorporating all newly recruited Polish soldiers into French service. Augereau, Lauriston, and Reynier also were dubious about maintaining distinct Polish units, but Napoleon ignored their views. Robert Bielecki and Andrzej Tyszką, *Dał nam przykład Bonaparte: Wspomnienia i relacje żołnierzy polskich 1796–1815* (Cracow, 1984) I: 32

⁵² This Cracovian unit was formed after Poniatowski had retreated to Cracow, from the young men of Cracow department. They were given a uniform based on the folk costume of the Skalmierzyc region. Poniatowski made Umiński their commander. Other officers, such as Dwernicki, were assigned when the ranks were too thin in their own units. The *krakusy* were feared by the Hungarian and Prussian cavalry and were particularly affected against the Cossacks and uhlans. After Umiński was captured at Leipzig, Dwernicki became the regimental commander. At Leipzig, there had been 4,000 in the Cracovian unit; Dwernicki commanded only 1,500 in France. Franciszek z Błociszewa Gajewski, *Pamiętniki* (Poznań, 1910) I: 337.

⁵³ Jan Weyssenhoff, *Pamiętnik generała Jana Weyssenhoffa*. (Warsaw, 1904), 164.

⁵⁴ Jan Pachonński, "Wojskowość polska w dobie Legionów i Księstwa Warszawskiego, 1795 – 1815,"

The Austrians became increasingly friendly with the Russians. On 29 March, a convention was signed between the two powers: General Sacken, commanding the Russian army in Galicia, would advance up the Vistula toward Cracow, while Schwarzenberg would cross to the right bank of the Vistula to avoid contact. Another convention for an armistice would then be signed by the Austrians and Russians, forcing the Poles to evacuate Cracow. Poniatowski, informed of this Machiavellian scheme, tried to use French intervention to force the Austrians to maintain their defense perimeter. He wanted to keep the Polish army on Polish soil, fearing that its departure would see the extinction of all feeling for France.⁵⁵

Despite the steady increase in the number of troops, Poniatowski had only 5,000 men with battle experience. The prince contemplated breaking out and taking cover in the forts at Modlin, Zamość, or Gdańsk, still garrisoned by Napoleon's troops.⁵⁶ Or he could lead an armed expedition from Cracow into the occupied duchy and begin a rearguard action against the Russians already in Greater Poland. General Frimont, the new Austrian commander, however, had firm orders that the Poles were to stay behind his lines, preventing any contact with the

Russian army. Initially, Frimont made excuses, but Poniatowski soon saw through them.⁵⁷ The Austrian was frank in telling Poniatowski that if he did not keep behind the Austrian army, he would be abandoned. In order not to lose any more territory, Poniatowski had to obey.⁵⁸ When he was informed that the Austrians would be retreating into their own territory, Poniatowski recognized he had two choices: Either come to an agreement with the Russians or cross into Austria and hope to reach the French forces in Germany. The War Minister had no current instructions from Paris or Dresden: He would have to decide himself.⁵⁹ It was clear that the ministers would accept any decision that Poniatowski might make.

Poniatowski was torn in two directions, just as he was now a political as well as a military leader. As commander of the Polish army, he felt honour-bound to respect his oath to Napoleon. As political leader, he recognised the importance of Alexander I's offer. As a military man, he remained loyal, but as a politician he had broader considerations than an oath.

in Janusz Sikorski, ed., *Zarys dziejów wojskowości polskiej do r. 1864* (Warsaw, 1966) II: 345.

⁵⁵ Poniatowski, V: 173-73.

⁵⁶ Morawski, VI: 172.

⁵⁷ Poniatowski to Narbonne, Cracow, 18 April 1813, Poniatowski, V: 204.

⁵⁸ Louis P. E. Bignon, *Souvenirs d'un diplomate: La Pologne (1811 – 1813)* (Paris, 1864), 343.

⁵⁹ Poniatowski sought instruction from Paris. Bignon sent a message to the French capital with Rumigny. Frederick August, in Regensburg was also informed of the request for direction. The king ordered the army to retreat through Habsburg territory to Bavaria, but this message did not arrive. Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki*, II: 18.

Bernhardt had already abandoned the French emperor in order to safeguard Sweden's interests.⁶⁰

All Europe seemed to be against the Poles, only Napoleon's genius seemed to protect them.⁶¹ When Poniatowski finally read General Sacken's proposal to disarm and disband his army, he reacted violently: He would not be treated like a Caucasian mountain leader or like a Dagestani princelet.⁶² Poniatowski only had a small army, most of whom were fresh recruits. He possessed twenty guns and sufficient ammunition for no more than three hours of battle. Logic dictated that he retreat through Austrian territory to the west, but the decision was more difficult than when he evacuated Warsaw: Leaving Cracow meant abandoning Polish territory.

The Austrian General Frimont had no wish to give up Cracow—he wished to win it for the Habsburgs—but he also wanted to pressure the Poles to leave. As a result, the Austrians troops behaved worse as allies than they had as enemies in 1809.⁶³ On 8 April, Vienna finally agreed to allow Poniatowski's army to travel through Moravia and Bohemia; on 21 April an Austro-Saxon convention was

signed to this effect. Austria insisted that the regular troops be disarmed, that they move in five columns separated by a minimum of three days march in a staged withdrawal.⁶⁴ In preparation, Poniatowski appointed numerous men as officers in order to keep as many arms as possible in the ranks, but he also feared that his new recruits would become demoralized after leaving their native soil and desert the ranks.

Vienna delayed implementation of the convention, fearing that St Petersburg would be offended if the Poles were to cross the frontier into Austria. Metternich even allowed his anti-Polish feelings to surface in a conversation with Narbonne, Napoleon's ambassador in Vienna, who was trying strenuously to force the Austrians to agree to Poniatowski's transit through their empire. At the same time as he received news of this transit agreement with the Habsburgs, Poniatowski received word from Napoleon that he was not to allow disarmament by the Austrians. He was in a horrendous crossfire, between the Russian threat and the Austrian pressure, between the Saxon agreement and Napoleon's order. He refused steady pressure to think only of his nation and ignore France.

Vienna's awkward position was finally resolved by the Austro-Russian armistice of 26 April 1813, by which the

⁶⁰ Adolf Bocheński, *Rzecz o psychice narodu polskiego* (Warsaw, 1986), 22.

⁶¹ Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki*, I: 389.

⁶² Askenazy, 275.

⁶³ Fryderyk Skarbek, *Dzieje Księstwa Warszawskiego* (Warsaw, 1897), II: 239.

⁶⁴ Weyssenhoff, 165.

Austrian troops were to cross the border and the Russians to occupy Cracow. Ultimately, only acceptance of the Austrian offer to allow transit through Habsburg territory seemed consistent with Poniatowski's strong sense of honor. He wrote of this decision to the French ambassador in Vienna, Narbonne, as well as to Prince Eugene and Frederick August.⁶⁵ Poniatowski was not naïve; he had understood Czartoryski's warning about Vienna's intentions; he feared internment once inside Habsburg territory. There was at least a chance that he and his troops, however, would rejoin the *Grande Armée* assembling in Germany.

Cracow's population was still willing to fight and the duchy's ministers thought it unwise to abandon Cracow—some fearing the complete abandonment of the duchy's territory, others desiring to negotiate with the Russians.⁶⁶ Poniatowski and Bignon, however, both recognized the impossibility of their position and could only hope that French diplomacy would deliver the Polish army from Austria once inside its borders. Remaining in Cracow would result in the army's inevitable capture and probable dissolution by the Russian occupiers. Undertaking a rear guard action in the duchy would lead

sooner or later to defeat and a forced capitulation.

The pressure on Poniatowski was unrelenting. Even Frederick August appeared to have left Napoleon's side by leaving Dresden for Bohemia, where he was under Austrian protection. The fall of the fortress of Toruń on 17 April also further worried Poniatowski. At his headquarters, there was little relief in either thought or action. Throughout these difficult days, the words "honor" and "conscience" appeared frequently in his correspondence. The Austrian general Frimont made Vienna's position clear: no Austrian soldier would fire one shot in the Poles' defense; no food, supplies or ammunition would be provided should they stay in Cracow.⁶⁷ Still without Napoleon's instructions, the prince decided to enter Austria. On the morning of the army's withdrawal, Linowski, a personal friend of the prince, ran into Poniatowski's quarters. The commander was still in bed, but Linowski exclaimed that by leaving Cracow he was losing himself and the entire country. The prince listened to him patiently, then pointed to one of the

⁶⁵ Poniatowski, V: 192-3, 204-5, and 195-6.

⁶⁶ Tadeusz Mencil, *Feliks Łubieński: Minister sprawiedliwości Księstwa Warszawskiego (1758 – 1848)* (Warsaw, 1952), 198.

⁶⁷ Poniatowski, V: 249-50. The Russians themselves blamed the Austrians for pressuring Poniatowski's withdrawal. "Note sur la Conversation du 13/25 Juin 1813 avec Sa Majesté Impériale," Adam Czartoryski, *Mémoires du Adam Czartoryski et correspondance avec l'empereur Alexandre Ier* (Paris, 1887), II: 325. Alexander would have preferred that Poniatowski be pressured to join the Russians and blamed the Austrian action on envy of Russian success.

pistols next to his bed: “Last night I had it in my hand twice. I wanted to shoot myself in the mouth to escape this position, but I finally determined that I would not leave Napoleon.”⁶⁸ Now that he had finally made his decision, he would not be shaken from it. Poniatowski had resolved his mental dilemma, choosing loyalty over patriotism. The first column crossed the border into Austria on 7 May.

Only after his victory at Lützen on 2 May, did Napoleon have time to turn his thoughts to Poland. He had been kept informed by Bignon in Cracow and he was well aware of the machinations of the duchy’s ministers. He sent General Michał Sokolnicki, no friend of Poniatowski, to Podgórze, Polish army headquarters, to pass on the imperial order to create a diversion in the enemy’s rear and tie down a large number of enemy troops. Poniatowski’s rival arrived on 10 May; only one of the Polish army’s five columns remained in the duchy. Poniatowski suspended all further movement across the border.

Napoleon’s new direction assumed Austrian co-operation. The French emperor could not believe that his father-in-law would betray him, but when the Austrian General Frimont was shown Napoleon’s orders, he refused their execution. Once again, Poniatowski found himself in a dilemma. He had orders from

Napoleon to remain in the duchy and Frederick August had authorized negotiations with the Russians.⁶⁹ He had a proclamation from the Council of Ministers that supported the former direction while Czartoryski had urged the latter. And he was convinced that all of these approaches would only lead to capitulation. In the face of contradictory orders, Poniatowski held the initiative.

He waited for a day while Sokolnicki quarreled with Frimont. After informing Berthier of Frimont’s refusal to change direction, on 12 May, Poniatowski himself crossed the Vistula into Austria hoping to reach the *Grande Armée* now in Saxony.⁷⁰ That same day Poniatowski finally received a letter from Berthier written after the victory at Lützen and providing detailed direction to Poniatowski: He was to support the Austrian contingent, if it did its duty as Schwarzenberg had assured Napoleon. If not, he was to move to elsewhere in the duchy to create a diversion.⁷¹

⁶⁹ “Je vous autorise à faire tout ce qui dépendra de vous pour pourvoir sans compromettre l’armée vous maintenir soit à Cracovie soit du moins dans le royan de Podgórze par des mesures prises de concert avec les Autrichiens, ou en négociant un armistice avec les commandants russes.” Frederick August to Poniatowski, Prague, 2 May 1813. Askenazy, lxxxii.

⁷⁰ Poniatowski to Berthier, Szydzina, 11 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 263, #865.

⁷¹ Berthier to Poniatowski, Peau, 4 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 266, # 2.

⁶⁸ Koźmian, II: 102.

The imperial order came too late and could not be carried out. The Polish army was now in Galicia under Austrian escort. Just before he left the duchy's soil, Poniatowski explained to Narbonne that it was not the enemy that had forced his withdrawal, but famine. He damned the Austrians: "Quels vilaines gens, faux, faibles et arogans."⁷² Although Vienna had advised Narbonne that the Poles could remain in Cracow and that they would be furnished with food and munitions, it was clear that Narbonne was simply being played by Metternich.⁷³ As Poniatowski informed Narbonne, Frimont once again insisted that he had not been authorized to furnish either food or forage to the Polish army.⁷⁴ Poniatowski explained to Berthier that he had only enough cash to pay for two day's provisions; he had to leave Cracow. The prince also informed Napoleon's chief of staff that Frimont had informed him that the Russians would occupy Cracow on 13 May and that the Austrian general was not authorized to defend the city.⁷⁵

The duchy's government followed its army, leaving the duchy's territory on 13 May. The Russians occupied Cracow

that same day. Crossing the Austrian frontier, the Polish army—now called the VIII corps of the *Grande Armée*—was divided into five separate columns, each separated by a day's march.⁷⁶ As Poniatowski feared, 392 soldiers deserted. The Austrians reported that the men feared that they would be sent to Spain or even overseas.⁷⁷ The officers remained loyal, however: They had no love of the French, but they felt that only Napoleon had done something for them and they should show their gratitude. The troops' arms were placed in boxes and its artillery harnessed to peasant horses. In effect, the troops were disarmed. Poniatowski marched in the third column. The troops marched through Bielsko-Biala to Skoczów. Locals there ran to provide horses, and the Poles then went on to Frýdek, leaving Austrian Silesia and entering Moravia in Mistek. The Austrians reported that the Poles' conduct was exemplary.⁷⁸

⁷² Poniatowski to Narbonne, Podgórze, 12 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 269, #869.

⁷³ Narbonne to Bignon, 9 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 270, #2.

⁷⁴ Poniatowski to Narbonne, Kęty, 13 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 272, #871.

⁷⁵ Poniatowski to Berthier, Kęty, 13 May 1807, Poniatowski, V: 277, #872.

⁷⁶ Poniatowski, V: 276-7, n. 1. Napoleon issued a decree on 27 June 1813 organising the VIII corps. Art 26 gives Poniatowski the same rank and treatment as the French marshals. The complete text in French is provided in Skalkowski, *O cześć*, 180-84.

⁷⁷ Schlussbericht des Oberlandeskommissärs Freiherrn v. Escherich an das K.k. Landespräsidium über den Marsch der sächsischen und warschauschen Truppen durch Galizien, Neusandec, 23 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 275, #1.
⁷⁸ The Austrian commissioner knew nothing of the agreement on deserters, but there was already an agreement of 11 June 1812 that each side was to return deserters to the other. Escherich noted, however, that district officials had given Polish

Feeling guilty that he had not followed Napoleon's order, Poniatowski wrote to Berthier justifying his decision not to remain in Cracow, but to show good will he indicated that he would not move further into Austrian territory than Cieszyn. He still hoped that he might fulfill most recent Napoleon's direction by returning to Cracow and creating a diversion behind Russian lines. The first column had halted at Přerov (Prerau), a position that the prince judged to be equally distant from Saxony and Silesia or the duchy, allowing the Poles to move in whatever direction Napoleon might indicate.⁷⁹ Poniatowski learned Sacken had left Cracow on 16 May, marching toward Silesia: He could return to Cracow, thus responding to Napoleon's order.⁸⁰ After Poniatowski informed Frimont of his halt,

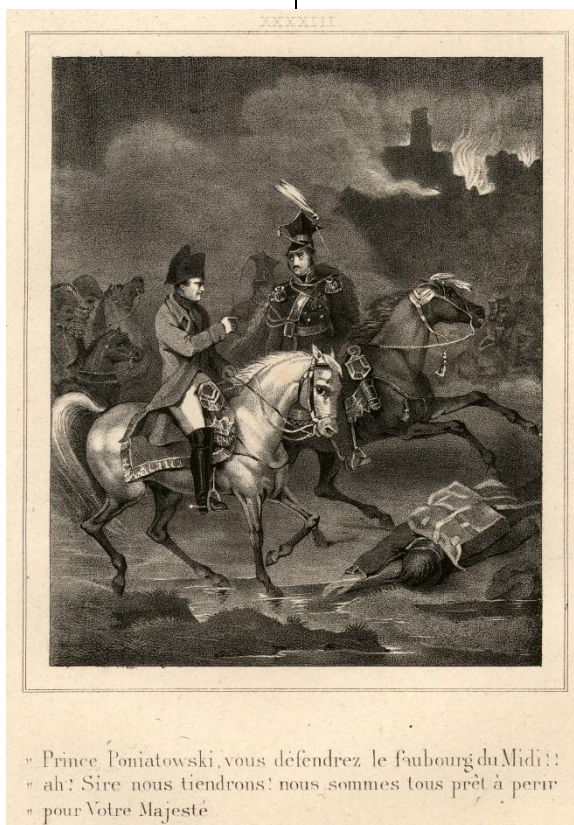
deserters passes and sent them to L'viv.
Schlussbericht des Oberlandeskommissärs Freiherrn v. Escherich an das K.k. Landespräsidium über den Marsch der sächsischen und warschauschen Truppen durch Galizien, Neusandec, 23 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 275-76, #1.
⁷⁹ Poniatowski to Berthier, Cieszyn, 15 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 283, #876.
⁸⁰ Poniatowski to Berthier, Cieszyn 19 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 290, #891.

the Austrian general refused to provide rations.⁸¹

Narbonne advised Poniatowski

that Napoleon understood the difficulties that Austria had caused him, but that he should take advantage of the changed Austrian attitude after Napoleon's victories and should march to Saxony rather than return to an isolated position.⁸² On 18 May, Poniatowski received Berthier's new order to march to Saxony, heading for Zittau.⁸³ Archduke Ferdinand, Morava's commandant general, however,

refused either to allow him to halt at Přerov or to deviate from the original route, which would not allow the Poles to



⁸¹ Frimont also informed the prince that he was no longer in charge of the Polish corps' support, which had now been assigned to Prince Col. von Hohenlohe, commander general in Moravia. Frimont to Poniatowski, Krzywaczka, 16 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 285-86, #1.
⁸² Narbonne to Poniatowski, Vienna, 16 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 290-91, #1.
⁸³ Berthier to Poniatowski, 14 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 289, n. 2; Poniatowski to Berthier, Cieszyn, 19 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 289, #881.

join the *Grande Armée*.⁸⁴ Poniatowski's troops remained between Frýdek and Přerov as he awaited further direction. As he wrote to Berthier, from this position he could move on to Zittau or return to Cracow, depending on new orders, although the Austrians refused to provide further food or forage.⁸⁵ The VIII corps now numbered a total of 16,352 infantry and 7,523 cavalry.⁸⁶

Narbonne intervened to comfort Poniatowski, indicating that he had learned from Berthier that Napoleon's direction regarding a Polish diversion was only advisory. The emperor now wanted Poniatowski to join him by the shortest route and that he should even double the length of his marching days so that he could reach Saxony the more quickly.⁸⁷ As a result, Poniatowski once again began to move his troops. Poniatowski reported that the Austrian authorities were now treating him well, but he still wrote longingly of Cracow, where no more than 200 Cossacks remained.⁸⁸ Poniatowski's army marched through Moravia and Bohemia, reaching Zittau on 18 June. The

next day Napoleon reviewed his Polish troops for two hours.⁸⁹

The prince spent two months in the Saxon town, re-forming his troops, combining units when they were under effective strength. Polish soldiers who escaped from Russian captivity joined Poniatowski's troops there. Napoleon took on the cost of providing for this Polish corps, although this figure was to be transferred to the duchy's fictional war budget where it would constitute "a special expense."⁹⁰ He also used the Dresden storehouses to clothe and arm his men. After the indecisive Battle of Dresden in late August, Napoleon reinforced the VIII corps with 3,000 Polish prisoners of war from the Austrian armies.⁹¹ When the Polish corps captured 300 Austrian hussars at Altenburg and freed 3,000 French prisoners in September 1813, Napoleon remarked, "c'est une belle et brave nation."⁹²

⁸⁴ Archduke Ferdinand to Poniatowski, Brno, 21 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 307, #2.

⁸⁵ Poniatowski to Berthier, Nový Jičín, 24 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 309, #891.

⁸⁶ "Stan wojsk ósmego korpusu z 22 V 1813," Poniatowski, V: 302-05.

⁸⁷ Narbonne to Bignon, Vienna, 21 May (?) 1813, Poniatowski, V: 311, #2.

⁸⁸ Poniatowski to Berthier, Slavkov, 29 May 1813, Poniatowski, V: 315, #896.

⁸⁹ Jaszowski, 106.

⁹⁰ Napoleon I, *Supplement Supplement à la Correspondance de Napoléon: L'Empereur et la Pologne* (Paris, 1908) 68. Since the duchy had no budget, Napoleon's direction shows both his confidence that the duchy would be liberated and his own miserliness in refusing to pay for the army that was now fighting for him.

⁹¹ Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki*, II: 82 and 84-5. While reviewing the Polish regiments, the troops cheered "Niech żyje cesarz." Napoleon smiled and remarked to Poniatowski, "Vos Polonais me sourient toujours." Niemcewicz, II: pp. 68-69.

⁹² Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki*, II: 101-02.

Poniatowski had undergone a transformation in the midst of these trials, becoming more serious, conscious of his importance to the Polish cause. He was admired not only by the enemy forces, but even by the Saxons who were never friendly towards the Poles although they shared a ruler.⁹³ Napoleon had already granted Poniatowski the rank and status of a marshal, but not the title, by an imperial of 27 June 1813.⁹⁴ On the eve of battle, Poniatowski came to General Griois' batteries: He was anxious and sad. Both men were pessimistic about the chances for victory. Griois believed that Poniatowski had a presentiment of his fate.⁹⁵ The Duchy of Warsaw now lived on only through its army. At this crucial juncture, only Poniatowski's army represented Poland. The Duchy had been deprived of its government, indeed its territory, but the Polish cause remained viable as long as the Poles were a fighting force.

⁹³ Ostrowski, II: 362.

⁹⁴ Skalkowski, *O cześć*, 172. Even this advancement created rumors. In Vienna, it was assumed that Poniatowski would no longer command the Poles and the appointment was considered a signal that the Duchy of Warsaw no longer existed. De La Blanch to Narbonne, Vienna, 8 July 1813, Poniatowski, V: 344, #2. Neipperg claimed that "Fürst Poniatowski soll zum französischen Reichsmarschall befördert worden." Neipperg to Schwarzenberg, 9 July 1813, Poniatowski, V: 357, #1.

⁹⁵ Charles-Pierre-Lubin Griois, *Mémoires du Général Griois 1792–1822* (Paris, 1909), II: 253.

On 16 October, the first day of the Battle of Leipzig, the Poles showed their mettle. They met a terrible test of their endurance but they were successful in a day full of fighting. To the Allies' 300,000 troops, Napoleon could oppose only 160,000, a figure that included 18,000 Poles. Under attack from dawn to evening, the VIII corps kept its position and even captured Merveldt, an Austrian general, but their losses were heavy and Poniatowski was wounded by a musket ball. Poniatowski proudly wrote that the enemy had not gained an inch of terrain from the Polish position. His army's commitment and endurance was amazing, although he had lost one-third of his troops and he had no more ammunition.⁹⁶ On 16 October, as reward for his efforts, Napoleon formally appointed Poniatowski a Marshal of France, the first foreigner to be so honored. The news was received with mixed emotions by the Poles: Was Poniatowski now to be a Frenchman? A foreigner? When Poniatowski learned of these fears, he promised that he would never wear a uniform other than that of Poland.⁹⁷ Indeed, he continued to sign himself as "commanding general of the VIII Corps."

⁹⁶ Askenazy, 291.

⁹⁷ Poniatowski accepted the honor with mixed feelings, concerned that it might appear that he was no longer fighting for his own fatherland or that he would no longer command the Polish corps. Morawski, VI: 183. Frederick August agreed to Poniatowski's new honor. Ostrowski, II: 374.

There was no fighting on 17 October, but the next day the Poles faced their worst fight. Once again, the battle raged from dawn. This time Poniatowski faced a Prussian column, troops who despised the Poles. Against a force ten times as large, the prince defended his position, the village of Probstheide. Once again he personally led an attacking battalion. Alexander I, standing on a neighboring hilltop, witnessed the superhuman strength of Poniatowski, further increasing his respect for him. Once again Poniatowski held his assigned position, but again with heavy losses. Neither men nor supplies could be replaced. When Napoleon asked Poniatowski about the spirit of the Polish troops, the prince responded that it was good, but that they now fought not for their country, but for the honor of the Polish name.⁹⁸ In a letter to Jan Weyssenhoff, a brigadier general of the Polish cavalry, Poniatowski wrote, “bon courage et continuez à faire bien sonner le nom Polonais. Nous pouvons devons tenir à ce diction: Tous peut être perdu sauve l’honneur.”⁹⁹

On 18 October, the Saxons left the field and fresh Allied armies appeared.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki*, II: 98.

⁹⁹ Jan Weyssenhoff, *Pamiętnik* (Warsaw, 1904), 241.

¹⁰⁰ While most of the Saxon infantry went over to the Allies, two Saxon cuirassier regiments and many Saxon officers and troops who had received the Legion of Honor remained with Napoleon until

That evening, Napoleon learned that his artillery was running out of ammunition. The closest sources for additional supplies were in Magdeburg and Erfurt, too far to be useful. Napoleon concluded that continuing this epic battle was now useless; he ordered a retreat to begin that very night, carried out on a long, narrow route that crossed eight bridges. The troops, artillery, baggage train, ambulances, cavalry—all had to cross a small bridge over the Elster River.¹⁰¹

Napoleon ordered Poniatowski to defend the city’s suburbs until noon, thus protecting the retreat (perhaps because he was the last marshal who was not demoralized). When Napoleon asked Poniatowski how many Poles were guarding the bridge against the Allied advance guard, Poniatowski told him 800. Napoleon responded, “800 Poles are worth 8,000 troops.”¹⁰² Poniatowski concluded

he sent them to Dresden, with a letter of appreciation. John R. Elting, *Swords around the Throne: Napoleon’s Grande Armée* (New York, 1988), 404.

¹⁰¹ The French thought of burning Leipzig as punishment for the Saxon betrayal, but Napoleon could not bring him to order the city’s destruction under Frederick August’s nose, particularly since it was clear that the Saxon king was appalled at his army’s conduct. Gérard Walter, “Notes,” Emmanuel Las Cases, *Le Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* (Paris, 1956), II: 675.

¹⁰² Ostrowski, II: 380. In another version of this anecdote, when Poniatowski informed the emperor of his tiny force, Napoleon responded “Eight hundred brave men mean more than 8,000 cowards.” Kazimierz Niedzielski, *Rys dziejów Księstwa Warszawskiego* (Warsaw, 1907), II: 151.

the conversation with, “We’ll hang on. We will all be ready to die for Your Majesty.” Napoleon was moved and took the prince by his arms. Tears welled up in Napoleon’s eyes.¹⁰³ Poniatowski told his remaining troops, “Today we have a great duty! To cover the Emperor and his escort. Today it is preferable to die than to retreat one step.”¹⁰⁴ Poniatowski guarded the retreat throughout the night as the troops, wagons, and ambulances jerked their way over the Elster.

On the cold, grey morning of 19 October, a thick fog covered the swampy riverside. Smoke arose from the burning Leipzig suburbs; artillery and musket fire was so thick that it was hard to see for more than a few steps. Poniatowski and Marshal Macdonald managed to hold off innumerable attacks on what was now the sole remaining bridge over the Elster. Almost half the *Grande Armée* had crossed the river when at 11:00, the bridge was prematurely blown up by French sappers who heard Russian fire, saw Cossacks, and assumed it was the approach of the main enemy force. The rear guard, the baggage train, almost 200 artillery guns and 30,000

men—including prisoners and stragglers, wounded and ill—were now cut off.¹⁰⁵

The difficult French withdrawal turned into a disaster. Those troops who had not yet crossed could only surrender or attempt to escape across the river. Poniatowski and hundreds of his men were among this number. The prince retreated from the western suburb of Borna, leading a small escort of cuirassiers and *krakusy*, charging into enemy fire and pressing forward. His staff, generals Kazimierz Małachowski and Michał Grabowski, begged him to surrender. They were cut off and further defense was impossible. He could still serve his country, they argued. Poniatowski refused to listen. Weakened from his wound, exhausted from days of fighting, only half conscious, he reminded his men, “One must die courageously.” He was wounded again by a bullet in his side. Staggering, he fell into the river’s mud flats. His own horse became stuck in the mud. After a moment he regained consciousness, mounted a free horse with difficulty, tottering in the saddle as his blood flowed freely. He was already fatally wounded, but he ignored the cries of his staff and angrily spoke about Poland and honor before attempting to ford the Elster.¹⁰⁶ “God confided to me the Poles’

¹⁰³ Louis Constant Wairy, *Mémoires de Constant, premier valet de chambre de l’Empereur, sur la vie privée de Napoléon, sa famille et sa cour.* (Geneva, 1969, originally published Paris, 1830-31), II: 144.

¹⁰⁴ “Dziś wielką mamy spełnić powinność! ... Cesarza i jego zastępy osłonić. – Dziś raczej zginąć, jak na krok ustąpić.” Ostrowski, II: 381.

¹⁰⁵ A rumor spread in Paris that Napoleon had ordered the premature explosion in order to save himself at the expense of his army. Las Cases, II: 29.

¹⁰⁶ Others who attempted to cross the Elster, such as Poniatowski’s aide de camp Ludwik Kicki,

honor; I return it to God.”¹⁰⁷ Before he rode into the river, he told his officers, “Messieurs, c’est ici qu’il faut succomber avec honneur.”¹⁰⁸ In sight of advancing enemy infantry, he suddenly used his last strength to spur his horse into the river.

Supported by cavalry under Captain Bléchamp, he attempted to cross the river with his adjutant Captain Deschamps, but the prince was losing blood quickly. Another bullet hit him, going through his left breast. The horse turned over in the current.

Poniatowski did not know how to swim and his arm was in a sling. He slid off his horse and after a short struggle, he disappeared beneath the water.¹⁰⁹ Deschamps attempted to save the prince,

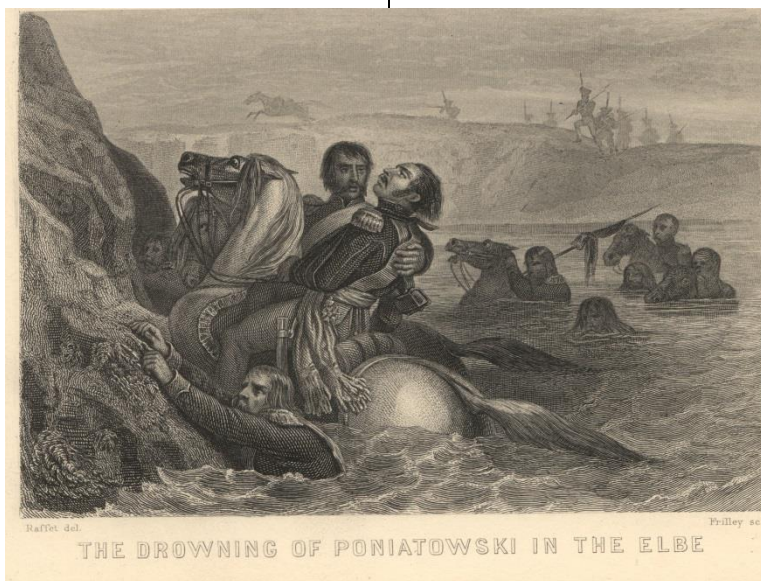
hoping to bring him to the river bank on the opposite shore, but the prince grabbed him and both drowned. The horse continued swimming with the current and reached the bank, not far from the remains of the bridge.

Three days after being named a Marshal of France, Poniatowski was dead;

his body was discovered downstream a day later. When Napoleon was informed of Poniatowski’s death, he shrugged his shoulders and said nothing. Only 500 troops from the VIII

Corps successfully retreated. The Polish losses at the Battle of the Nations were tremendous: 13 generals and 250 officers fallen or wounded, 10,000 killed, wounded, or captured soldiers.¹¹⁰

After Poniatowski’s death, General Sokolnicki, as the most senior commander, took on temporary command of the VIII corps. Despite the heavy fighting, the Poles had not lost any eagles and preserved their entire artillery. When the



survived, but were captured. Józef Dutkiewicz, “Wstęp,” in Natalia Kicka, *Pamiętniki*. (Warsaw, 1972), 11.

¹⁰⁷ Ostrowski, II: 388.

¹⁰⁸ Wairy, II: 149.

¹⁰⁹ Askenazy, 294-95. Napoleon awarded Poniatowski’s sister an annual pension of 50,000 francs in recognition of the prince’s services on 6 November 1813 from Mainz. Napoleon I, *Ordres et apostilles (1799-1815)*, Arthur Chuquet, ed (Paris, 1912), IV 320, #612.7.

¹¹⁰ Marian Kukiel, *Dzieje Polski porozbiorowe 1795–1921* (London, 1963), 155.

troops heard that Poniatowski was dead and that Napoleon authorized Frederick August to remain in Leipzig, their only wish was to return to Poland. Only a small number remained loyal to Napoleon.¹¹¹ On the night of 20 October, Polish troops began to desert. Every night by ones and twos, soldiers and even junior officers disappeared with their horses.¹¹² Some advised seeking direction from Frederick August, others even thought of returning to Leipzig and remaining with their duke. When the popular Prince Antoni Sulkowski was asked his opinion, he responded “We have gone so long with the French army, in accordance with our king’s will, we are under the emperor’s orders. Any independent step on our part would be treason; we cannot and should not action as long as he has not authorized it.” This view won the day, but it was necessary to ask Napoleon for direction. The universal view was that the remaining

Polish soldiers should go back to the duchy.¹¹³

Napoleon appointed Sulkowski as commander of the remnants of the VIII Corps on 23 October. Since both Dąbrowski and Sokolnicki had better claims to lead the Polish corps, even Napoleon’s appointment did not put the new commander in a strong position.¹¹⁴ He resolved to act on the consensus of his subordinates as long as they agreed with his sense of honor. He informed Napoleon that the Poles were disturbed, feeling the loss of their true leader Poniatowski as well as the loss of their sovereign, Frederick August: They requested that

¹¹³ “Opis Historyczny czynności Ósmego Korpusu ...,” Warszawa, 15 March 1814, in Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, ed., *Pamiętniki wojenne 1792-1815* (Dresden, 1871), 153-54.

¹¹⁴ Gajewski reported that all those who had admired Poniatowski, now despised Dąbrowski for the long running dispute between the two men. On the other hand, Dąbrowski was not eager to take on such a position, given the difficult conditions. Instead he tried to keep his division separate from the Polish corps. Sulkowski’s appointment, however, angered those more senior, such as Sokolnicki; General Krukowiecki intrigued against him, Gajewski, I: 351-52. Pachonński also notes that an intrigue of generals Krukowiecki and Kwaśniewski undermined Sokolnicki’s opportunity for leadership. Pachonński, “Wojskowość polska,” 347. In *Journal historique des opérations militaires de la 7e division de cavalerie légère polonaise, faisant partie du 4e corps de la cavalerie de réserve sous les ordres de M. le général de division Sokolnicki, depuis la reprise des hostilités au mois d’août 1813 jusqu’au passage du Rhin au mois de novembre de la même année, rédigé sur les minutes autographes, par un témoin oculaire* (Paris, 1814), it is incorrectly noted that the Poles exercised a veto on their next military leader, leading to Sulkowski’s promotion.

¹¹¹ “Po co iść do Francji, trzymać z cesarzem, gdy nas już mało jest, a cesarz sam sobie poradzić nie może? Wreszcie wyszlą nas się chcąc pozbyć, jak tamtych legionistów naszych wysłali do St Domingo, do jakiej zamorskiej osady dla walczenia z zabójczymi chorobami i dzikimi ludźmi. Jedyna nasza nadzieja i opieka – książę – już nie żyje, któż za nami słowo przemówi? Czyż nie lepiej oddać się w niewolę i powrócić do kraju, który i tak cały jest w rękę nieprzyjaciela, niż przy Francuzach wieszać jak jacy awanturnicy bez ziemi i bez ojczyzny.” Jaszowski, 115.

¹¹² Jaszowski, 116.

Napoleon authorize their return to Poland. Napoleon was hardly pleased, but he resorted to a combination of a threat and delay: "Inform your countrymen that the king of Saxony remained in Leipzig on my authority, that the battle continued and that I will hold liable everyone who abandons me at this moment. The Poles will now be peaceful: They will go with my guards and in eight days I will decide."¹¹⁵ Sułkowski was satisfied with this response and he gathered all his officers and shared Napoleon's words. They too were content and promised not to keep Napoleon's deadline of eight days. Napoleon's tactic and Sułkowski's style of leadership worked: desertions were substantially reduced, but the soldiers put a mark on their caps for each day that passed.¹¹⁶ Sułkowski's first formal responsibility was to honor Poniatowski's memory; he ordered the entire corps to wear signs of mourning and to cover the Polish eagles in black crepe.

Murat was still with the *Grande Armée*. He had always felt close to the Poles and he tried to convince Napoleon that it was senseless to take the Polish troops all the way to France: It would be better to let them return to their homeland. During the retreat, Sułkowski reported only to Napoleon, although through Berthier or Murat. As a result of

heavy cavalry losses, Napoleon wanted to regroup his horsemen and instructed Sułkowski to send his remaining cavalry to General Lefebvre-Desnouettes while he would continue to command the infantry. The Poles were irritated by this division. Although Sułkowski obeyed Napoleon, he informed the emperor of the disturbance that this order had caused, adding that it would increase desertions. An angry Napoleon responded—adding a few soldierly phrases—that he would not listen to such concerns. Sułkowski returned to his men and communicated Napoleon's direction, but the army would not accept it. Without the prince's knowledge, General Krukowiecki went to Murat, requesting that he intervene with Napoleon to change this order. The impetuous Murat immediately went to Sułkowski and authorized him to keep the corps together. The prince showed him Napoleon's written order and related the scene with the emperor. Murat immediately went to Napoleon and returned a short while later: "The emperor has changed the order. Tell the Poles that they all remain under your leadership and you will report solely to the emperor." The Polish troops were delighted with the news and Murat awarded Sułkowski the grand cross of his Neapolitan order, but the process had inevitably undermined the prince's prestige. Krukowiecki had gone behind his back and it had taken Murat's intervention to change Napoleon's mind;

¹¹⁵ Opis Historyczny czynności Ósmego Korpusu, 157.

¹¹⁶ Jaszowski, 118.

Sulkowski's authority had been undermined by this minor affair.

On 27 October at Schlüchtern, Napoleon gathered the 300 Polish officers and, sitting on his horse, he emotionally appealed for their support. (General Sokolnicki translated for emperor):¹¹⁷

Do you want to talk with me? I know your intentions. You have completely fulfilled your obligations to me: You fought well and now wish to leave me at the border. I have no right to ask more of you. You have behaved yourselves openly and honorably with me. But what now of yourselves? Where do you want to return? To your fatherland? It is conquered. To your king? He no longer has an inch of land. Where will you go? My fate will not be changed by the loss of an army, not even as brave as yours. But what will your compatriots say? What will your descendants? Will they not be able to accuse you of losing the nation's hope? There are rumors that I neglected the Duchy of Warsaw. This is the fruit of my blood; the duke of Warsaw is me! I

¹¹⁷ Tadeusz Ostrowski, Sulkowski's adjutant, provided the text to his brother Antoni. See Antoni Jan Ostrowski, *Żywot Tomasza Ostrowskiego, ministra Rzeczypospolitej później Prezesa Senatu Księstwa Warszawskiego i Królestwa Polskiego, oraz Rys wypadków krajowych od 1763 r. do 1817* (Paris, 1836), II: 394-6. A more extended version is provided in the VIII corps official history, written in 1814, but the tenor is the same. "Opis Historyczny czynności Ósmego Korpusu," 163-68.

gave you a good monarch. Instead of a warrior I had to choose one who would not disturb your neighbors; I had to give you a German, but he, governing you, only executed my orders. I am your duke. The Saxon king is a virtuous man, he is my friend, but he is a man without energy: he was not the one that you needed. I desired that you would have a kingdom – read the *Moniteur* about it – you will find in it the official act concluded between me and Austria in which the existence of Poland was guaranteed. You would have had a Polish kingdom, if I had stopped between Vitsebsk and Smolensk: you have proof of that in my agreements with Austria, concluded a year ago, but I went too far; I made errors.¹¹⁸

Then Napoleon's tone changed:

"You're disturbed that you do not have with you Prince Poniatowski, but rejoice: he was not killed, but the Swedes took him prisoners. They say that he will be in disguise; he knows the Russians, he'll return. Stanisław Potocki (President of the duchy's council of ministers) is to come, your ministers also and I'm working on it. You would be in a different situation if your government had had more energy. Your Treasury Minister (Matuszewicz) did stupid things. The Czartoryskis harmed me. Your levy was poorly executed. You did

¹¹⁸ Jaszowski, 118.

not live up to your and my hopes. You did not show the same love of country as the Russians. I wanted a *levée en masse*; an uprising of all your nobility.¹¹⁹

When a young officer, Artur Potocki, Poniatowski's former adjutant, interrupted the imperial discourse by saying "That would have happened if we had been allowed to call upon the national cause." The emperor responded:

Maybe! I could not be everywhere. Pradt was stupid and I made mistakes. You don't imagine that I tried to correct them? The existence of the Duchy of Warsaw was protected by treaties; you wanted me to break them? You weigh returning home with bended brow over the hope of returning with arms in hand? Today this small force, a couple of thousand men, although the bravest, means little to me, but I advise you for your own interest to remain with me. I'll send you in the interior of France and put all of you on horses. You'll spend a couple of peaceful months there—and is it so bad to spend six months in a good climate, in a beautiful country. I will pay you your salary. I count on the existence of the duchy of Warsaw, but if I ever must give it up, I will take care of each one of you. You'll return with honor or stay with me as I wish. Returning now, you will be received as prisoners. The peace

will contain an article concerning you. You will return free.

I now ask you: Will you abandon me?¹²⁰

The emperor's words stirred up the soldier's patriotism and devotion. The response was unanimous: General Krukowiecki shouted, "Vive l'empereur" and soon all those present began shouting "Vive l'empereur!"¹²¹ Sokolnicki, on behalf of the troops, responded to the emperor that "the Polish army never thought about renouncing its cause." Once again the Poles followed Napoleon's banners. It was a dramatic moment and Napoleon filled it out with a combination of rhetoric, lies and half-lies. Despite Alexander's generosity to the captured Poles, the Polish soldiers remained loyal to the French emperor. Napoleon gave a dirty look to Sułkowski, said farewell to the gathering and left.

Sułkowski had said nothing during Napoleon's speech. Indeed, he acted as if this meeting had nothing to do with him. He was certain that views would not change and he was amazed to hear the cries of support for Napoleon. Napoleon's glance convinced him that he would be regarded as an instigator. He also feared that when emotions cooled, he would have to deal with the outcome. Immediately after Napoleon left, the prince announced,

¹¹⁹ Jaszowski, 118.

¹²⁰ Jaszowski, 118.

¹²¹ Jaszowski, 118.

“You’ve pronounced your own fate – I am released from my promise. As for me, because I never promised anything, I continue to feel bound by my word, which I was forced to give you, that I would not cross the Rhine. I no longer wish to remain as leader.”¹²² Sułkowski kept his word of honor and the next day he gave Napoleon a letter in which he requested permission to return to his country, where he would proffer his resignation to Frederick August. The emperor was amazed and asked, “Why do you want to leave me?” The prince’s simple response was that he was bound by his word and that he no longer felt capable of effectively fulfilling Napoleon’s direction. “Fine,” pronounced Napoleon, returning to his tasks. Sułkowski’s chief of staff, Major Henryk Zabiello, also sought permission to leave.

Two days later, General Flahaut, Napoleon’s adjutant, called the VIII corps’ generals and officers together and informed them that at the request of Prince Sułkowski, Napoleon was authorizing his return to Poland. Dąbrowski would become leader of the VIII corps although Pac became the next commander of the Poles marching with Napoleon. Sułkowski issued his last order of the day from Gillenhausen to his comrades in arms in which he once again

explained his decision. On 31 December, Sułkowski and Zabiello left the army.¹²³

On 1 November, the *Grande Armée* began to cross the Rhine near Mainz. Napoleon ordered that the Polish IV cavalry corps and the VIII corps were to continue to Sedan where they would be reorganized; he also ordered that they be given two months’ pay.¹²⁴ The Poles gave up their guns, wagons, horses—all that belonged to the French government. Each officer could take one horse. The Polish units were the only foreign troop formations that remained with the *Grande Armée*, following Poniatowski’s example. After Napoleon’s first abdication in April 1814, Alexander I received the remaining Polish commanders and the Russian emperor, together with his brother the Grand Duke Constantine, expressed his

¹²² “Opis Historyczny czynności Ósmego Korpusu,” 167-68.

¹²³ When the two men reached the enemy lines, they asked to be sent to the king of Saxony in order to offer their resignations. They were surprised to learn that their sovereign was a prisoner of war. Now they were depressed by their decision and complained that they should have remained in France as civilians until the conclusion of peace. Sułkowski was sent to Schwarzenberg’s headquarters, but he refused to see any of the allied rulers, fearing that he would be seen as a traitor to Napoleon’s cause. When the prince arrived in Leipzig, he sent a letter of resignation to Frederick August through the Russian ambassador in Dresden, Stackelberg. The letter was never answered. Sułkowski remained in Dresden, until they received permission to leave in the Duchy of Warsaw. “Opis Historyczny czynności Ósmego Korpusu,” 170.

¹²⁴ Napoleon to Berthier, Mainz, 3 November 1813, Napoleon I, *Ordres et Apostilles (1799-1815)*, Arthur Chuquet, ed., IV (Paris, 1912), 311, #6099.

regret at Poniatowski's death and permitted the disparate Polish units to be organized into a single corps, in order to return to Poland.

The Warsaw authorities intended Poniatowski's remains to be transferred there. Warsaw's mayor asked Alexander I for permission to organize a commemoration for Poniatowski and the Russian emperor agreed. On 19 November, the ceremony took place in the Church of the Holy Cross. That same day ceremonies were held in Warsaw's synagogues and Protestant churches as well as in two additional Roman Catholic sites, the Capuchin and Bernadine churches.¹²⁵ Despite the permission given to commemorate the fallen leader, Alexander forbade the transfer of his remains to Warsaw. Only in May, did Alexander I withdraw his prohibition on bringing Poniatowski's remains to Warsaw. Repnin, the Russian governor general in Saxony, received the imperial order to give Poniatowski's body to the Polish army returning from Paris for re-internment in Warsaw. As a result of formalities, only on 17 July 1814 did an honor guard led by General Sokolnicki—Poniatowski's old rival—move the remains from Leipzig. In each Polish town, memorial ceremonies were held; the coffin only reached Warsaw on 9 September. After an initial burial in Warsaw, his remains were exhumed and

re-interred in Cracow's Wawel, Poland's Pantheon, on 23 July 1816, and placed next to the grave of Jan III Sobieski, conqueror of the Turks at the siege of Vienna.¹²⁶

In his will, the Prince left 200 ducats for Warsaw's beggars and another thousand ducats to those Warsaw poor who were too ashamed to beg.¹²⁷ His personal arms were to be distributed among his decorated soldiers whom he asked to drink once a year in his honor. He provided for his two natural children as well as for an ancient valet. His niece, Anna Potocki, was left his summer estate at Jablonna and his sister, Countess Tyszkiewicz, everything else.¹²⁸

In the end, it was the Polish politicians who managed to preserve Napoleon's legacy in Poland, not Poniatowski. Alexander I kept his commitment to the Poles and established the Kingdom of Poland, preserving the duchy's administrative and legal achievements. The ministers who had

¹²⁵ Karolina Beylin, *Piętnaście lat Warszawy (1800-1815)* (Warsaw, 1976), 222.

¹²⁶ The great Polish preacher and later primate of Poland, Woronicz, gave the sermon when Poniatowski was buried in Warsaw and again when he was exhumed for reburial in Cracow: "Kazanie na pogrzebie sprowadzonych do Warszawy zwłok śp. Jaśnie Oświeconego Książęcia Józefa Poniatowskiego... [10 września 1814]" in Jan Paweł Woronicz, *Pisma wybrane*. (Warsaw, 1993), 476-91 and "Przemowa przy spuszczeniu do grobu śmiertelnych zwłoków śp. Józefa Księcia Poniatowskiego [23 lipca 1817]" Woronicz, 492-97.

¹²⁷ Woronicz, 745, #19.

¹²⁸ Potocka, 345.

conspired against Poniatowski kept alive the Napoleonic reforms. Poniatowski's historical legacy is significant, however, for he became a symbol of the Napoleonic period in Poland's history. A noted cultural historian, Aleksander Brückner, noted that "the real duke of Warsaw was Józef Poniatowski, minister of war."¹²⁹

Poniatowski was the creator of a national army, combining the tactics learned in the Austrian army with the strategies borrowed from Napoleon. His talents put the other Polish commanders in the shadows, although he was always open to compromise and was ever flexible in achieving his ends. Although he never had the opportunity to lead a modern, mass army, he demonstrated his leadership skills in 1809. Although trained as a cavalryman, he knew how to exploit artillery fire and he led the infantry into a bayonet attack more often than he led his cavalry in a charge. He transmitted his personal beliefs in loyalty, gallantry, honour, perseverance, and valour to the Polish military. The duchy's military had its roots in the democratic, egalitarian experience of the Polish Legions in Italy, but Poniatowski the aristocrat moved the military towards his own ideals, a movement that was reinforced by Napoleon's imperial direction. The Polish soldier was considered a free man selflessly defending the national interest. In the

¹²⁹ Aleksander Brückner, *Dzieje kultury polskiej*, vol. IV (Warsaw, 1946), 204.

absence of a strong middle, the army took upon itself the defence of national interests.¹³⁰

A powerful military allowed the duchy to punch above its weight, but Napoleon—while appreciating Polish loyalty—was suspicious of Polish goals interfering with grander strategies. He carefully diffused Polish military strength throughout the *Grand Armée* during the Second Polish War. The French emperor did not want the Poles interfering with a victory in 1812 as they had in 1809, a success that had complicated and eventually undermined Napoleon's alliance system. In 1812, the Polish contribution to Napoleon's military efforts was second only to those of France itself, but not only is it not only under-appreciated, it was also not as effective as it might have been.

The myth of Napoleon reinforced the cult of the Polish military since both had a common foundation in the Napoleonic wars. The Polish military seemed responsible for protecting the Polish nation, but it also came to stand above the Polish state. The military looked down upon civilians and military

¹³⁰ This phenomenon was by no means limited to Poland during this militaristic era. For a parallel situation in Russia, see Лидия Леодовна Ивченко, *Повседневная жизнь русского офицера эпохи 1812 года* (Москва, 2008).

needs were paramount.¹³¹ Poniatowski not only ignored the government in 1809, but also in 1813, undermining the work of the politicians seeking to reach a *modus vivendi* with Alexander I. Such behaviour became a part of the Polish military tradition.¹³² Heroic figures like Poniatowski served not only as examples of military glory but also as models for future heroes. Poland's greatest poet praised Napoleon as "the god of war."¹³³ A Polish military march of this period became the national anthem in which Bonaparte's name is specifically mentioned. During the Napoleonic era, the Polish military was directly tied to the Polish cause, assuming a role not merely as the defender of the nation but as one of the chief pillars of Polish nationalism.

The duchy's ruler, Frederick August, lamented that the Duchy's soil bred soldiers and even fortresses, but not money.¹³⁴ The French military reforms assimilated by the Polish military during this period turned the army into a training ground for future citizens as well as

modern soldiers. Most of the government's budget was devoted to military purposes. By royal decree, the military were not subject to any court, either for civil or criminal cases.¹³⁵ Its elevated role meant that the military's needs were, however, always paramount. Aleksander Fredro, a Napoleonic veteran and one of Poland's greatest playwrights, recalled that the army ruled the duchy with an iron scepter.¹³⁶ The identification between army and nation led to the military's belief that it alone represented the nation.¹³⁷ Militarism was thus first injected into Polish life by the duchy's army.

Poniatowski's life and actions strengthened the Polish nation, giving it confidence in the nation's ability to command its own future. Poniatowski's work—like the duchy's existence—had erased the partitions of Poland, forcing the European powers to re-consider Poland's future at the Congress of Vienna. His death in the Elster River came to be regarded as a sacrifice for the nation, not a suicidal attempt to save his personal honour. As Tadeusz Korzon pointed out, however, if Poniatowski remained loyal it

¹³¹ "Stan wojskowy był wówczas uprzywilejowanym stanem. Zarozumiałość i duma francuzkich wojskowych, ich pogardzanie spokojnymi obywatelami, wynoszenie się nad wszystkich i przywłaszczanie sobie prerogatyw, przez prawa nieznanych, przeszły w krótkie drogą złego przykładu i do polskich wojskowych." Skarbek, *Dzieje*, I: 217.

¹³² Following this tradition, in 1830, 1926, and 1981, the Polish military intervened to "save" the state, with difficult consequences on each occasion.

¹³³ Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz* (Warsaw, 1985), 35, Book I, verse 894.

¹³⁴ Kukiel, *Dzieje*, 132.

¹³⁵ Skarbek, *Dzieje*, I: 217.

¹³⁶ "Wojskowość panował w Księstwie Warszawskim żelaznym berłem. Mało znaczył obywatel więcej znaczy od konia szeregowego, to za to o wiele mniej od każdego szeregowca. Aleksander Fredro, *Trzy po Trzy* (Warsaw, 1968), 102.

¹³⁷ See the letter of the Military Commission to Grand Duke Constantine, 27 November 1814, where army and nation almost seem interchangeable. Naruszewicz, *Pamiętniki*, II: 188.

was to a foreign standard.¹³⁸ His sense of loyalty won out over his patriotism. It has been said that Poniatowski saved Poland's honour, but lost its independence.¹³⁹

Today an equestrian statue of Prince Józef stands in Warsaw. Created by the great nineteenth-century Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen and modelled after the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius in Rome, the prince points with his sword to all those who pass it on one of Warsaw's main streets. Although destroyed by the Nazis, it was recast in 1965. This statute, like the prince's legacy to Poland, reminds the world as well as his compatriots that the nation he fought to uphold is not lost, but perseveres.

¹³⁸ Tadeusz Korzon, *Kościuszko : biografia z dokumentów wysnuta, przez K. Poprzedzona rzutem oka na dzieje Muzeum Narodowego w Rapperswyłu i katalogiem zbiorów kościuszkowskich w temże Muzeum przechowywanych* (Cracow, 1894), 526.

¹³⁹ Joachim Benyszkiewicz, *Naród bez państwa: o czynnikach integracji i dezintegracji narodu polskiego pod zaborami* (Zielona Góra, 1987), 18.

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