Napoleon Bonaparte
1799-1815

“Consecration of the Emperor Napoleon I and Coronation of the Empress Josephine in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris,” Jacques-Louis David (1807)
Napoleonic France: Essential Questions

1. How did Napoleon Bonaparte rise to power in France? Why was he so popular?
2. During the period of the Consulate, what reforms did Napoleon initiate?
3. How did Napoleon establish himself as an emperor?
4. How did Napoleon govern the European territories he conquered?
5. How did Napoleon contribute to the rise of nationalism in Europe?
6. What was the nature of the relationship between France and Britain during the Napoleonic period?
7. How did geography play a role in France’s invasion of Russia?
8. How was Napoleon both enlightened and despotic?
9. How did the Congress of Vienna attempt to create a lasting peace?
Napoleon Bonaparte: Background

• personal
  ✓ born on island of Corsica (1769)
  ✓ son of a minor noble
  ✓ studied in French military schools

• military
  ✓ worked his way up the ranks of the French military to become a general
  ✓ helped crush a revolt in Paris (1797)
  ✓ led the French army to victories in Austria and Italy and, as a result, became a popular war hero

• rise to power
  ✓ Napoleon seen as someone who could provide order
  ✓ came to political power in 1799 as a leader in the 1799 Coup d’État (18 Brumaire)
The Consulate (1799-1804)

Napoleon Bonaparte background

“Napoleon Crossing the Alps”
Jacques-Louis David
The Consulate (1799-1804): Basics

• established in 1799 coup d’état

• government modeled on the Triumvirate from Ancient Roman Republic
  ✓ officially led by 3 consuls, but most important was Napoleon Bonaparte (1st Consul)
  ✓ universal male suffrage established, but real government was controlled by Napoleon (dictator in disguise)
The Consulate: Concordat of 1801

• Compromise between French government (Napoleon) and the Vatican (pope)

• Vatican….
  ✓ had the right to depose French bishops
  ✓ controlled the clergy
  ✓ given guarantee that French Catholics could practice openly
  ✓ assured clergy would receive salaries from French government

• Napoleon…
  ✓ assured that Vatican would not seek to reclaim lost church lands
  ✓ allowed to keep Avignon (papal city annexed by France in 1791)
  ✓ allowed to put Protestants on state payroll, along with Catholics
  ✓ maintained right of France to practice religious toleration

• results: good relations between French government and Vatican popular with French citizens, especially peasants
The Consulate: Code Napoleon (1804)

• background
  ✓ codified a single unitary legal system for all of France (threw out all remaining local and customary law)
  ✓ provided the basis for France’s legal system today
  ✓ also known as the Napoleonic Code or Napoleon’s Civil Code

• enlightened elements of Code Napoleon
  ✓ equality of all people before the law (in theory)
  ✓ protected property rights
  ✓ guaranteed freedom of occupation
  ✓ guaranteed freedom of conscience
  ✓ all children were to inherit equally (women, too!)
The Consulate: Code Napoleon (1804)

- unenlightened elements of Code Napoleon
  - reaffirmed paternalistic nature of France (women and children legally dependent on man)
  - women could not buy or sell property without man’s permission
  - divorce, although legal, was more difficult for women to attain
  - banned organized labor unions
  - protected owners over workers
The Consulate: Use of Plebiscite

• plebiscite background
  ✓ a plebiscite is a “yes” or “no” vote (referendum)
  ✓ used by Napoleon to legitimize his actions and programs
  ✓ gave the appearance of democratic participation, but the plebiscites were held after the action had taken place (faux democracy)

• Napoleon’s use of plebiscite
  ✓ Constitution of the Consulate where he made himself 1st Consul
  ✓ Concordat of 1801
  ✓ Code Napoleon
  ✓ 1804 when he abolished the Consulate and declared himself emperor
The Empire (1804-1814/15): Establishment of the Empire

• Napoleon made himself emperor (Napoleon I) in 1804
• held a plebiscite: population overwhelmingly agreed with his decision to establish an empire
• crowning ceremony
  ✓ ceremony at Notre Dame in Paris (not Rheims, where the French kings had traditionally been crowned)
  ✓ Pope Pius VI invited, but Napoleon placed the imperial crown on his own head and then placed one on Josephine’s (his wife)
  ✓ message: Napoleon became emperor by his own will and actions (not because of God or the pope)
The Empire (1804-1814/15): Establishment of the Empire

"Consecration of the Emperor Napoleon I and Coronation of the Empress Josephine in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris,"
Jacques-Louis David (1807)
The Empire: Battle of Trafalgar (1805)

• major naval battle fought off the coast of Spain: France vs. Britain
  ✓ Napoleon’s attempt to destroy British navy
  ✓ British navy, led by Lord Horatio Nelson, crippled the French fleet

• result: Napoleon instituted the Continental System

Nelson’s Column in Trafalgar Square, London pays tribute to the fallen hero

AP European History • Napoleon • J.F. Walters
The Empire: Organizational Highlights

• family affair: Napoleon’s relatives installed as government leaders in conquered lands (nepotism)
  ✓ son Franz became king of Rome
  ✓ brother Joseph served as king of Naples and later as king of Spain
  ✓ sister served as queen of Naples
  ✓ stepson was the viceroy of the “Kingdom of Italy”

• exported Napoleon’s civil law (Code Napoleon) to conquered lands

• dissolved the Holy Roman Empire and replaced it with the Confederation of the Rhine
Journal 48: Under Napoleon, some of the main principles of the French Revolution—with the notable exception of self-government—were introduced in all countries of the Grand Empire.

Directions: Using sentences or detailed bulleted notes, identify & explain the evidence Palmer uses to support the thesis listed above.
The Empire: Napoleon at the Height of his Power

EUROPE IN 1810
At the Height of Napoleon’s Power

- French Empire
- "Greater Empire," subject to Napoleon, undergoing internal reform.
- Nominal Allies of Napoleon.
- Openly hostile to Napoleon; protected by British Fleet.
- Hostile to Napoleon.
- Battles
- Continental System, boycotting British trade.

Source: Rand McNally
The Empire: Continental System (1806-14)

• following the failure of Napoleon’s navy to defeat Britain at the Battle of Trafalgar, Napoleon resorted to using economic warfare in an attempt to defeat what Napoleon called the “nation of shopkeepers” (Britain)
  ✓ no trade with Britain allowed
  ✓ all of continental Europe was brought into system

• hurt British industry but the Continental System ultimately failed
  ✓ sea trade was controlled by British navy, hampering trade within the Continental System and hurting their economies
  ✓ Britain able to acquire raw materials from its colonies
  ✓ Russia, hurt by the Continental System, withdrew (1810)
Journal 47: The Continental System was worse than a failure, for it caused widespread antagonism to the Napoleonic regime.
The Empire: Growth of Nationalism

• Napoleon’s army carried with it the ideas of the French Revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity
• result: growth of nationalism
  ✓ ideas affected the conquered lands of Europe
    - incentive to drive out French military occupiers
    - increased awareness of national identity
    - stirred lower classes against ruling elite
  ✓ examples
    - Spain in the Peninsular War (Spanish fight to oust the French)
    - growth of German nationalism (volksgeist)
The Empire: Continental System (1806-14)

*Journal 50:* German ideas fell in with the ferment of fundamental thinking known as romanticism, which everywhere challenged the ideas of the Enlightenment.
The Empire: Invasion of Russia (1812)

- Napoleon wanted to conquer Russia
  - ✓ vast land and resources
  - ✓ payback for withdrawing from Continental System
- Napoleon invaded Russia with his Grand Army (600,000)
- Napoleon’s army initially made quick progress but later was slowed
  - ✓ rainy autumn and harsh winter
  - ✓ Russian tactics of scorched earth and retreat
- Napoleon eventually lost and retreated
The Empire: Invasion of Russia (1812)
The Empire: The Final Years

- Napoleon defeated in 1814 by the combined powers of Russia, Prussia, Austria and Britain
  - Napoleon exiled by victorious powers to Elba, a Mediterranean island off the coast of the Italian peninsula
  - Napoleon escaped exile and returned to Paris in 1815
    - declared himself emperor
    - declared war on Europe

- Hundred Days (1815)
  - Napoleon’s return to power and war with Europe
  - Napoleon defeated in 1815 at Battle of Waterloo
  - Napoleon exiled to St. Helena (south Atlantic)
Video Profile: Napoleon Bonaparte
Congress of Vienna (1814-15): Overview

• held in Austrian city of Vienna
• began in 1814 but interrupted by Napoleon’s Hundred Days (1815)
• major European powers dominated
  ✓ Austria: Prince von Metternich (Prime Minister)
  ✓ Britain: Viscount Castlereagh (Foreign Minister)
  ✓ Russia: Tsar Alexander I
  ✓ Prussia: Prince von Hardenberg (Chancellor)
  ✓ France: Talleyrand (Foreign Minister to Louis XVIII)
• Minor countries represented
• Congress of Vienna: sometimes referred to as the Peace of Vienna
Congress of Vienna (1814-15): Overview

• major goals of Vienna
  ✓ legitimacy: return former ruling families to power
  ✓ compensation: compensate victors with land
  ✓ order and stability
    - create an orderly and stable Europe by preventing the spread of revolutionary ideas: “Concert of Europe”
    - crush revolutions before they grow too big

Prince Metternich: Chief architect of the Congress of Vienna
Congress of Vienna: Legitimacy

- dynasties overthrown during the course of the French Revolution and Napoleonic period were returned to power
  - ✓ France: Louis XVIII became king
  - ✓ Netherlands: House of Orange returned to power
  - ✓ Spain: return of the Spanish Bourbons
  - ✓ Portugal: House of Braganza returned to power

Bourbons returned to France in the form of Louis XVIII (1814/15-24)
Congress of Vienna: Compensation

- victors in the Napoleonic Wars compensated themselves with land
  - ✔ Austria: annexed Italian provinces Lombardy and Venetia
  - ✔ Prussia: gained much of the left bank of the Rhine River and part of Saxony
  - ✔ Russia: occupied Poland

Tsar Alexander I took control of Poland, a country who lost its independence from 1815-1919
Congress of Vienna: Compensation

Source: Rand McNally
Congress of Vienna: Order and Stability

• order and stability: the major powers at the Congress of Vienna hoped to create a peaceful Europe where the balance of power was restored, revolutionary outbursts were snuffed out (the Metternich System) and, as a result, order & stability would be pervasive throughout the continent (the “Concert of Europe”)

✓ Belgium added to the Netherlands to create a stronger state on the French border

✓ Switzerland guaranteed “eternal neutrality”

✓ Kingdom of Piedmont given city of Genoa

✓ German states kept disunited
  - fear a unified Germany would alter the balance of power
  - Vienna established a loosely-organized German Confederation in the former Holy Roman Empire
  - both Austria and Prussia were members of the German Confederation
Congress of Vienna: Order and Stability

• The Metternich System: The Quadruple Alliance
  ✓ goal: 4 great states of Europe worked together to balance the power of France and crush revolutionary ideas
  ✓ members: Britain, Russia, Prussia & Austria
  ✓ pledged to work together for 20 years

• Holy Alliance
  ✓ brainchild of Tsar Alexander I of Russia
  ✓ fusion of conservative political ideas and Christianity: “alliance of throne and altar”
  ✓ included Russia, Prussia and Austria
  ✓ Britain rejected Holy Alliance

• The Metternich System would be used in the wake of the Congress of Vienna in an attempt by Europe’s great powers to maintain the conservative values of the Peace of Vienna
Journal 51: The Peace of Vienna had its strong points and its weak ones.

—Palmer Chapter 51 • pp. 421-31—

Directions: Using sentences or detailed bulleted notes, identify & explain the evidence Palmer uses to support the thesis listed above.
Sources

- The Bedford Glossary for European History, Eric F. Johnson, et. al. (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007).
- Western Civilization, 10/e, Edward McNall Burns, et. al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984).
- Wikipedia.com (en.wikipedia.com).