

IMPERIAL DIPLOMATS: EXPLOITATION, REFORM, AND THE ROLE OF THE FRENCH

DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN MANAGING THE NAPOLEONIC EMPIRE

by

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Abstract

IMPERIAL DIPLOMATS: EXPLOITATION, REFORM, AND
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Alexander Stavropoulos

“Imperial Diplomats: Exploitation, Reform, and the Role of the French Diplomatic Corps in the Napoleonic Empire, 1803-1813” explores, through the examples of two French ambassadors in the satellite states of Bavaria and Spain, how the French Diplomatic Corps used coercion and manipulation to govern the Napoleonic Empire from 1803 to 1813. Relying on the papers of their embassies, this dissertation delves into the role that the ambassadors assumed as the proconsuls of Napoleon’s European empire, setting the parameters of the imperial relationship between Paris and the satellites they were stationed in. The ambassadors performed tasks that were central to the proper functioning of that empire, including the maintenance of an extensive series of exploitative measures that secured money and soldiers for France’s many wars of conquest, and cajoling the satellites into remaining loyal allies despite the incredible financial burden such exploitation placed on them. The latter was accomplished by quiet coercion and an unspoken quid pro quo between the satellites and France, whereby the French supported local attempts to institute domestic reforms in exchange for the participation of the satellites in the empire. At the same time, the evidence shows that contrary to the assertions of many historians, the domestic reform of the satellites was a low priority for the Emperor’s diplomats, with the important exception of administrative and military reforms that strengthened the ability of the satellites to meet the demands of Napoleonic exploitation. The ambassadors, understanding local circumstances much better than the Emperor or the imperial bureaucracy in Paris, softened Napoleon’s angry demands, and on occasion altered or disobeyed imperial orders to ensure the support of local collaborators for the Empire, making possible its expansion and maintenance. Moreover, the ambassadors implemented a series of imperial policies that were atypical of nineteenth century European diplomacy, ranging from the enforcement of the Continental System against imported British goods, to the transport of important works of art from the satellites to the Louvre.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my mother, Dr. Anastasia Gregoriades.

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Introduction

The building and maintenance of an empire is not for the faint-hearted. The great empires have always required the diligent and creative work of special agents for their continued existence. In the case of the Napoleonic Empire of 1799-1814, it was the French Foreign Service that provided these for one that extended at its height from the Atlantic to the plains of Poland.¹ In the twenty-one years between France's first conquests during the Revolutionary Wars and its collapse in 1814, the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères* was occupied with the task of managing twenty separate satellite states in western, central, and eastern Europe.² The primary thesis of this dissertation is that it was the Napoleonic diplomatic corps, led by its ambassadors, which played a central and innovative role in the running of the empire. This included everything from sending the works of Spanish artists to the Louvre, to a treaty that defined the borders of the German states. The ambassadors also developed creative solutions to deal with a variety of problems, from resistance of satellite governments to exploitative imperial policies, to the threat those same policies posed to the financial stability of these subordinate nations.³ These diplomats were therefore among the very few directly responsible for the running of the empire, both through their efforts to maintain its exploitative methods, and their ability to convince collaborationist satellite governments to remain dutiful allies. This central role makes them worthy of detailed study.

As the French Republic acquired new territories after 1793, the Republic's diplomats became

¹ Counting personnel both at the Ministry in Paris and legations abroad, there were about 400 members of France's Foreign Ministry during the Napoleonic Era.

² I will generally refer to the subordinate states of the Napoleonic Empire as "satellite states" or "satellites."

³ In both cases studied, the satellite was driven to the brink of bankruptcy by French exploitation, and in both cases, the French ambassador requested that exploitation be alleviated to preserve the government to which they were posted.

one of the primary groups (along with the military) charged with governing the states under French domination. After Napoleon seized control of France in 1799, he shifted more responsibility to the diplomatic corps, giving them the primary duty of enforcing imperial policies. By fulfilling this role, France's diplomats became in effect imperial proconsuls. Relying on the correspondence of two of France's ambassadors, Louis Guillaume Otto in Bavaria and the Antoine Rene Charles Mathurin, Comte de Laforest in Spain, this dissertation examines in detail this role, explaining exactly what they did and did not do to influence the satellites, and how they implemented the policies that made the empire work.⁴

Thanks to their efforts, France was able to shift much of the burden of the Napoleonic Wars onto the satellites, thus contributing substantially to the success of the emperor's armies. In addition, through the Continental System and various trade agreements, they helped exploit France's dominant position to create a favorable European wide balance of trade for the *metropole*.⁵ Other tasks included assisting the French military and protecting French property, although this was usually of secondary importance.⁶

The role these representatives played in the domestic reforms of the satellites was another important element of their mission. The Foreign Ministry rarely intervened in these matters. Even the ambassadors themselves only occasionally played a *direct* role in them (except those concerning military reorganization and taxation). In the two case studied here, other reforms were usually planned and instituted by local leaders, and were the product of pre-Napoleonic reformist movements. However,

⁴ At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the head of a mission to a foreign country was typically known as a minister regardless of his rank. To avoid confusion between the heads of foreign missions and the heads of the various ministries of France and of the satellites, the head of a foreign mission is here referred to as an ambassador, whether or not he held that rank.

⁵ Officially instituted by the Berlin Decree of November 21, 1806, the Continental System is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four. In brief, it was the prohibition of trade between Britain and Europe.

⁶ Edward A. Whitcomb. *Napoleon's Diplomatic Service* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1978), 94-108.

the *indirect* support the ambassadors gave reforms allowed them to proceed more quickly and more extensively than they otherwise might have. This also allowed the recruitment of local collaborators, without whose help, the administration of the empire could not have succeeded.

While the Foreign Ministry attempted to dictate the operation of its embassies, making the system work in fact required each representative to use his own initiative. On many occasions, both ambassadors acted without orders (and in a few cases in defiance of them), using their special position and authority to manipulate satellites in their own way so as to achieve the emperor's larger goals. In the end, it was the skill and creativity of men such as they that helped the Napoleonic Empire last as long as it did.

Earlier histories have simply acknowledged that France's Foreign Ministry was to some extent involved in the politics and governance of the satellites, without giving any specifics as to how the diplomats did this, or how effective they were. They therefore have missed the crucial, creative role of individual ambassadors in forging and maintaining the empire. This history begins with an examination of the organization and methods by which that empire was governed.

Part One: The Institutions and Methods of Empire

Chapter One: The Foreign Ministry and the Governance of the Napoleonic Empire

In order to run the empire, the Foreign Ministry began to develop procedures that were used to enforce decisions central to the imperial system.¹ This chapter begins by explaining how the Ministry became so important to Napoleon's empire, while also providing a demographic breakdown of who the diplomats more generally were, a general description of the methodology used to analyze the sources, and lastly an explanation of why I chose to focus on the Spanish and Bavarian embassies. Finally, it traces the evolution of the Ministry into an increasingly bureaucratic Paris-based administration, even though its diplomats occasionally continued to rely on traditional, pre-bureaucratic practices.

In asserting the importance of the transformation of the Ministry, I am contradicting older institutional histories, such as those of Frederic Masson² and Jean Baillou,³ which assert that it essentially regressed to the practices of the pre-revolutionary period. However, it is not claimed that the diplomats themselves became bureaucrats, as the evidence clearly shows that they strongly resisted the efforts of the Parisian Ministry to force them to slavishly enforce imperial policies. It is also true that while the Ministry in Paris became more bureaucratic in its day to day operations, it continued to use older forms of patronage to recruit and occasionally promote its personnel. Still, it is nonetheless clear that the Ministry developed some new bureaucratic methods that were unique to the Napoleonic era.

¹ In the early nineteenth century, there were two major divisions of France's Foreign Ministry, the ministerial bureaucracy in Paris, and the Foreign Service. When "the Ministry" is referred to, it means the Parisian bureaucracy; when "the Foreign Service," it means the diplomats serving in foreign posts.

² Frédéric Masson. *Le département des affaires étrangères pendant la Révolution, 1787-1804* (Paris: E. Plon et cie., 1877).

³ Jean Baillou. *Les affaires étrangères et le corps diplomatique français*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1984), Tome I.

To study the Foreign Ministry one must of course study the individuals in it. Their prosopography tells much about the organization in which they worked, as well as the extent to which the Diplomatic Corps increasingly became a career for the diplomats and the role of the Foreign Service in governing the Napoleonic Empire. But first, the methodology by which I plan to pursue my particular sources must be addressed.

Methodology

Considering the hundreds of diplomatic histories written of the Napoleonic era in the last two hundred years, one question that has to be asked is why yet another diplomatic history is necessary. The answer is that none of the earlier histories cover the role of French diplomats in running the Napoleonic Empire. One cannot appreciate either how the Empire operated or what its goals were without knowing what it was that France's diplomats were doing for that empire. Moreover, the perspective of these diplomats can provide important insights into how the satellite states of the Empire responded to the demands of the French, and the degree to which they collaborated with France's imperial ambassadors.

More specifically, I follow a path laid by earlier Napoleonic historians like Geoffrey Ellis and T.C.W. Blanning that have argued that the Empire was largely a French effort to extract money and soldiers from its satellites.⁴ A focus of the manuscript therefore is to explore the methods used by the French for the extraction of such resources from the satellites.

Though this dissertation relies largely on the correspondence of the two ambassadors on which it centers, complemented by the accounts of other contemporaries, it supplements a traditional approach to diplomatic history with a textual analysis of the correspondence using

⁴ A more in depth discussion of the arguments used by Ellis and Blanning can be found in Chapter Two.

different methods from political, economic, and cultural history. I thus do not rely on a single methodology, but instead use the method appropriate to the subject I am trying to elucidate from a particular piece of correspondence. For example, the use of French embassies to spread Napoleonic propaganda by the Emperor, explored in Chapters Five and Nine, draws on existing historical theories regarding the techniques of propaganda and public opinion in the nineteenth century (techniques that were in many ways invented by Napoleon) to explain how the French Foreign Ministry sought to promote a particular narrative regarding the Empire and its actions.

A second question that must be posed and answered is why I chose Bavaria and Spain as the two embassies to be studied. First, Spain and Bavaria were incorporated into the Empire through different means, Bavaria having willingly allied with France in 1805, while Spain was forcibly brought into the Empire in 1808 by a military invasion. Seeing how the different circumstances of their entry into the Empire affected their experience of the Empire was something I wanted to explore, especially to see if it translated into differing reactions of the satellite governments to the exploitative demands of the French. Second, I wanted to test a particular thesis of the historian Michael Broers regarding the existence of inner and outer zones within the Empire, choosing a satellite within each zone.⁵ Third, I chose two of the larger and more important satellites in the belief that in such states a greater variety of the methods typical of Napoleonic imperial diplomacy would have been used. Fourth, I knew that both Bavaria and Spain had made a strong effort, with French support, to introduce internal reforms during the Napoleonic era, so I felt I could explore through those examples the degree to which French diplomats dictated or influenced reform within the satellites and whether France had served as a model for reform. Fifth, I knew there were several other primary sources that could be used to supplement the diplomatic correspondence. Sixth, both states had suffered from long periods of

⁵ For a longer analysis of Broers' theory of inner and outer zones of the Empire, see Chapter Two.

guerrilla warfare against the French and their collaborators, an aspect of the Empire I wanted to explore. Seventh, from the information I had been able to gather regarding the two ambassadors before I began to actually study their correspondence, I knew that both had a reputation for being highly competent diplomats, and I felt that it was best to start with examples that would show the Empire at its most effective. Finally, I chose Spain in part because it had been ruled by the Emperor's brother Joseph, to see if the family relationship between the rulers led the satellite to be treated differently.

The Role of the Foreign Ministry in the Napoleonic Empire

As had been the case throughout its existence, the primary role of the French Foreign Ministry in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras was to execute the foreign policy of the French state. With the creation of a system of satellite republics by the French Republic after 1793, the Ministry had to adapt itself to the additional task of managing an empire that would eventually span half of Europe.

After the Brumaire *coup d'état*, the diplomatic corps became the primary institution for the execution of policy, as the French military (with the exception of Spain and the Dalmatian provinces) lost its role in governing the satellites.⁶ Napoleon, a born micro-manager, made every

⁶ On the role of the French military in governing the satellite under the Republic, see Angus Heriot. *The French in Italy, 1796-1799* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957), 79-260; John Anthony Davis. *Naples and Napoleon: Southern Italy and the European Revolutions (1780-1860)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 72-106; Jacques Godechot. *La Grande nation: L'expansion révolutionnaire de la France dans le monde, 1789-1799*, Second Edition. (Paris: Aubier, 1983), 357-93, 474-94; and Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution française*, 8 Vols. (Paris: Bibliothèque des Introuvables, 2003), Vol. IV and V; Sorel, *Bonaparte et Hoche en 1797* (Paris: E: Plon, Nourrit et cie, 1896), 138-353. The last work covers General Hoche's failed attempt to create a Cisrhenian Republic in western Germany and Bonaparte's comparative success in creating the Cisalpine Republic in northern Italy.

effort to ensure that his was the decisive voice in making imperial policy. However, the practicalities of communications in the early nineteenth century meant that diplomats had a great deal of freedom to make decisions on their own. In addition, Napoleon's Foreign Ministry continued to rely on pre-modern methods of recruitment and operation that had not changed since the time of Louis XIV. With no written manuals dictating procedures, they only had only a series of informal principles to guide them. This allowed them to shape policies according to their own desire, although the administration in Paris often tried to restrain them.

In the end, it was the diplomats themselves who were a key element in running the empire. They had the necessary language skills and knowledge of local conditions, and were in daily and direct contact with the satellite governments. The personnel of the other ministries were largely confined to Paris. They had, except for the Ministries of Police, War, and War Administration, little contact with the satellites.⁷ The Ministry of Police, when not repressing internal rebellions and banditry, was focused almost entirely on training the emerging police forces of the satellites. The Ministries of War and War Administration remained narrowly focused on appropriating the financial and material resources needed to supply France's armies and training the satellites' forces to fight as auxiliaries. Since the entire purpose of the Foreign Ministry was to analyze local conditions while influencing those countries in ways that would benefit France, it was the natural organization to preside over the implementation (and eventually, the transformation) of imperial policy. But it was the bureaucratization of the Ministry's central administration that allowed it to deal with the increased amounts of information and tiresome paperwork necessary for the attempted coordination of imperial policy.

⁷ In 1802, Napoleon had divided the War Ministry into two separate organizations, the Ministry of War and the Ministry of War Administration. The latter was responsible for provisioning, transporting, and equipping of troops.

This evolution of the functions of the Ministry was not the result of any single order or decision.⁸ The diplomats had new tasks thrust upon them as other ministries began to make requests for information for projects germane to their own areas of jurisdiction. Generally, one or more of the ministers in Paris would request information about a specific satellite from the Foreign Minister, who would then refer the request to the appropriate ambassador.

In theory, the Foreign Minister was at the apex of the Ministry's hierarchy. However, Napoleon's determination to control France's foreign policy gradually reduced ministerial independence over time, turning his Foreign Ministers into mere clerks. Yet, in day-to-day matters there was still sufficient room for the Ministry to operate in areas for which specific orders had not been given (It was the ambassadors themselves, being away from Paris, who exercised a more creative, independent role). When a satellite government objected to the exactions of the empire, it usually addressed its grievance through the French ambassador to the Foreign Minister.

The Foreign Ministry was occasionally asked to mediate disputes with other French ministries. For example, matters of international commerce could involve the Interior, Finance, or Treasury ministries. In addition, the Foreign Ministry sometimes had to respond to requests from France's allies. In most cases, the entire process took place without Napoleon's involvement. Generally, his intervention was requested only if the ministries could not reach a consensus.⁹

⁸ One exception was in the area of propaganda, where the minister had been charged by Napoleon to direct propaganda both at home (through the insertion of foreign news into newspapers) and abroad. Propaganda will be covered in Chapters Five and Nine.

⁹ In one of the cases, Spain, the ambassador did play a larger role in advising the satellite government to adopt certain domestic reforms. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Nine.

Ultimately, then, it was the men posted abroad who were the real creative element in the Ministry, being able to direct (and sometimes reshape) imperial policy. Building on methods developed during the Revolution, they manipulated satellite governments to meet the constant demands of the emperor for more money and soldiers. In a manner atypical for eighteenth century diplomacy (although not without precedent), the French diplomatic corps also occasionally even dictated the foreign (and in some areas, the domestic) policies of the satellites.¹⁰ This scale of diplomatic intervention (in twenty separate countries) was something Europe had rarely seen before. Ambassadors Louis Guillaume Otto and the comte de Laforest themselves spent years negotiating with officials of their respective host nations, doing everything in their power to cajole the governments of Spain and Bavaria to submit to each imperial imposition. At the same time, they sought relief on several occasions for “their” satellite from exploitation. (In Spain, the ambassador’s intervention led to the granting of a monthly subsidy in 1811 of one million francs, thus saving the collaborationist government of Napoleon’s brother Joseph from bankruptcy.) To understand the central role played by the diplomats in the management of the Napoleonic Empire, it is necessary to understand how these men entered into the Foreign Service, and who they were.¹¹

¹⁰ Sweden and Poland both came under the influence of foreign embassies in the eighteenth century. See Michael F. Metcalf, *Russia, England and Swedish Party Politics: 1762-1766: The Interplay between Great Power Diplomacy and Domestic Politics during Sweden’s Age of Liberty* (Totawa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977)

¹¹ Jacques Henri-Robert lists 177 separate individuals, including consuls in North Africa and the Levant who served as envoys or as heads of missions to a foreign state between Napoleon’s accession as First Consul, and his second abdication in July 1815. The total number of French diplomats in foreign postings was well under a thousand even at the height of the Empire, when there were thirty-nine missions of the Foreign Service worldwide. Even the largest embassy (that of St. Petersburg) had only twenty-three employees. Whitcomb, 3, 6.

The Demographics of the Napoleonic Diplomatic Corps

Edward Whitcomb has demonstrated how by 1800 France's Foreign Service had been taken over by the bourgeoisie, with only two serving ambassadors being of noble birth. He classified four others as bourgeois, and five as petit bourgeois.¹² The numbers further down the hierarchy favored the bourgeoisie even more, with eighty-five percent of those of secretarial rank being of petit bourgeois status, fifteen percent bourgeois; there was not a single noble.¹³ All this suggests that the revolutionaries had succeeded in their efforts to replace the nobles who had previously dominated diplomacy, thereby reversing centuries of tradition.¹⁴

Under Napoleon, the practice of appointing nobly-born diplomats was resumed, with their proportion in the higher ranks of the service rising to sixty-eight percent by 1813.¹⁵ Napoleon believed that diplomats drawn from the old nobility would be more readily accepted at the aristocratic courts in which they had to operate. Foreign Minister Charles-Maurice de

¹² See "Appendix II: The Social Origins of the Ministers, Secretaries, and Employees of the Ministry, Shown in Absolute and Percentage Terms for Those Whose Social Origins are Known," Whitcomb, 160. Whitcomb classifies diplomats as noble, bourgeois, and petit bourgeois according to whether the diplomat's family held a noble title prior to the revolution, or by the profession of the diplomat's father (including parents who were lawyers, merchants, and military officers by profession). It was during the rapid turnover of Foreign Ministers in the early years of the Revolution that many of these bourgeois diplomats were brought into the Foreign Service.

¹³ Even before the French Revolution, many of the administrative positions of the Ministry had been occupied by the bourgeoisie. The rank of Secretary was the rank after Minister Plenipotentiary, with Secretaries generally serving as assistants to the head of a diplomatic mission.

¹⁴ The Comte de Laforest, for example, could trace six generations of ancestors who had served in the Foreign Ministry prior to his recruitment into the Foreign Service. "La Forest (Antoine René Charles Mathurin, Comte de)," in Henri-Robert, 223.

¹⁵ "Appendix II: The Social Origins of the Ministers, Secretaries, and Employees of the Ministry, Shown in Absolute and Percentage Terms for Those Whose Social Origins are Known," in Whitcomb, 160.

Talleyrand-Perigord¹⁶ seconded the Emperor's predilection for nobles, stating it was important that one should enter the Foreign Service with a substantial fortune to defray expenses (a fortune that Talleyrand, a bit of a snob, believed members of the bourgeoisie unlikely to have).¹⁷ The creation of a Napoleonic nobility in 1808, and a new imperial court, led to an accelerated recruitment of nobles, thus speeding the integration of the pre-revolutionary nobility into the empire's elite.¹⁸ Several diplomats were in fact recruited directly from among Napoleon's courtiers, as well as among, even more remarkably, returning émigrés.¹⁹

The mixing of members of the middle classes with the old nobility into the Foreign Service is typical of the policies upon which Napoleon based his regime. These were his notables, the "masses of granite," created through the processes of *amalgame* and *ralliement*. Through *amalgame*, bourgeois landowners (especially those who had acquired Church lands during the Revolution) formed the majority of the notables, while through *ralliement*, the old

¹⁶ One of the more infamous figures of the Napoleonic era, Talleyrand would serve as France's Foreign Minister from 1796 to 1807 (with a brief interregnum immediately after the Brumaire *coup*), and as an unofficial adviser to the Emperor on foreign policy after that. A useful brief biography is Maurice Schumann's, "Talleyrand-Périgord (Charles-Maurice de, prince de Bénévent)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, edited by Jean Tulard, 2 Vols. (Paris: Fayard, 1999), Vol. II, 829-33; Dwyer, *Talleyrand* (London: Longman, 2002).

¹⁷ Comte de Garden. *Code diplomatique de l'Europe ou principes et maxims du droit des gens modernes* (Paris: Amyot, n.d.), cited in Henri-Robert, 25. De Garden recorded the questions Talleyrand would address to a man who intended to enter the Foreign Service.

¹⁸ The Napoleonic nobility was designed by the emperor to rally pre-revolutionary elites to the new regime. A number of the most prominent members of France's middle classes were ennobled as well. See Jérôme Ziesenis, "Noblesse d'Empire," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 398-405.

¹⁹ With the establishment of the Napoleonic nobility, each diplomat of ministerial rank or higher was automatically inducted into the new nobility with the rank of Count of the Empire.

nobility was restored to positions of prominence.²⁰

As for the professional backgrounds of the diplomats, they can be divided into career diplomats, those who came from the imperial court, friends and family of the emperor, those drawn from other branches of government, and a small number of generals and foreigners. In the period between 1800 and 1807, Napoleon employed a number of generals in diplomatic posts. In many of these cases, they also advised the satellites on joint military operations. To give one example, General Sébastiani, sent as Napoleon's ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in May 1806, helped to re-organize the Turkish army to support France's campaign against the Russians in Poland.²¹ Generals were particularly prominent in the Foreign Service between 1801 and 1804, when Napoleon had had to reduce the size of the peacetime army. Putting prominent generals in the Foreign Service ensured they would be kept busy, and more importantly, that they would not be able to plot against him. Having himself come to power in a military *coup*, he was particularly alive to the danger. When the peace of Amiens ended in 1803, and war with Britain resumed, many of them went back into the army. By 1810 only three generals remained in the

²⁰ The official creation of the imperial nobility can be dated to the decree of March 1, 1808, that introduced the imperial titles of count, baron, and chevalier. As for the imperial court, its existence can be dated to early in the Consulate, when Napoleon revived the rules of etiquette and ceremony of the old regime such as formal audiences. On the notables, see Ellis, *Napoleon: Profiles in Power*, 125-51; John Dunne, "Power on the Periphery: Elite-State relations in the Napoleonic Empire," in *Napoleon and his Empire*, 61-76; Isser Woloch. *Napoleon and his Collaborators: the Making of a Dictatorship*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2001); and especially Louis Bergeron. *France Under Napoleon*, translated by R.R. Palmer. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 52-72.

²¹ Pierre Clavreuil, "Sébastieniani (Horace-François-Bastien, Comte de La Porta)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 747-9. It was Sebastiani who directed the successful defense of the Dardanelles by the Ottoman army against the Royal Navy in March 1807.

diplomatic service.²²

Although these officers did for a while play a significant role in the Foreign Service, it was the career diplomats who dominated. A very select group of families with a history of service provided many of these career diplomats.²³ Their success reflects the continuing importance of patronage in recruitment and promotion, as each generally relied on a prominent patron within the government to guide his career.²⁴ The emperor himself served as patron for those with whom he had a personal connection. His uncle, Cardinal Joseph Fesch, served as France's ambassador to the Vatican. Moreover, Napoleon employed his brothers Lucien as Ambassador to Spain (1800-1) and Joseph as the chief negotiator of several treaties, while Josephine's former brother-in-law, François de Beauharnais, served as ambassador to Spain from 1806 to 1808. In addition, Napoleon employed trusted associates like Generals Alexandre

²² Whitcomb, 49-50; and "Appendix III: Age and Experience of Diplomats and Sources of Recruitment of the Ministers," in Whitcomb, 161.

²³ Intermarriage between these families was also common. Laforest provides an example—on entering the Foreign Service, he served in the United States under Ambassador Demoustier. Demoustier *fils* would later marry Laforest's daughter Marie Caroline in February 1808, just before her father left for Spain, and the younger Demoustier would serve as ambassador at Laforest's old post, Madrid in 1825-7. The son of Demoustier *fils* (Laforest's grandson) would serve as Napoleon III's Foreign Minister between September 1866 and December 1868. See "Moustier (Clément Edouard, marquis de)," in Henri-Robert, 263-4; and Laforest, I, xxxviii-xxxix.

²⁴ Of our two primary subjects, Talleyrand was Laforest's patron, and the Abbé Emmanuel-Joseph Sièyes was Otto's. Sièyes had served on several important diplomatic missions under the Directory, including as Ambassador to Prussia (where Otto served as embassy Secretary), and was one of the chief plotters behind the *coup d'état* which brought Napoleon to power in November 1799. Catherine Kawa notes that patronage or nepotism was responsible for one-quarter of the careers within the Interior Ministry between 1789 and 1799, despite some efforts to make seniority the basis for all promotions. Catherine Kawa. *Les ronds-de-cuir en révolution: les employés de ministère du l'intérieur sous la première république (1792-1800)* (Paris: Editions de CTHS, 1996), 103-35, 227-66, 305-42.

Berthier and Michel Duroc for other diplomatic tasks.

The Foreign Ministry also sought to match the talents and background of diplomats to particular posts. Jean-François Bourgoing, for example, was appointed to the Danish embassy in 1800 because he had spent years living in Hamburg, and was thus familiar with the politics of northern Europe. Bourgoing would later serve as ambassador in Stockholm and Dresden. Whitcomb also reports that Napoleon insisted that the secretary appointed to the embassy in Vienna in 1806 be chosen from those who had previously served in Germany.²⁵ Louis-Guillaume Otto and Charles Reinhard, native speakers of German descent, were also used in the German states.²⁶

Just under one-tenth of the diplomats had a formal education, which was clearly not a requirement for a diplomatic career.²⁷ Of the 177 men Jacques Henri-Robert records as having served as heads of a foreign mission, fourteen had attended military school; several had even attended the *Ecole Militaire* in Paris.²⁸ Nine had attended a *college*, four a religious school, and

²⁵ Whitcomb, 60.

²⁶ Otto, being born in Baden, spent the period from 1803 to 1813 first as Minister to Bavaria, then as Ambassador to the Austrian Empire. The only non-German post he held under Napoleon was a brief period in London as Minister Plenipotentiary in 1800-1. Charles Reinhard, the only other German-born ambassador under Napoleon, was assigned largely to German states, as well as a brief posting to Moldavia. “Reinhard (Charles Frédéric, comte),” in Henri-Robert, 298-9.

²⁷ Figures on the diplomats’ education are compiled from entries in the *Dictionnaire Napoléon* and the *Dictionnaire des diplomates de Napoléon*. In some cases, an individual had pursued more than one avenue of education, as was the case of Napoleon’s brother Joseph, who began his education at the religious school of Autun, but later obtained a Laureat in Jurisprudence at the University of Pisa.

²⁸ Founded in 1750, the *Ecole Militaire* was designed to provide an education for future army officers from poor backgrounds. Napoleon was a graduate of the class of 1785.

three had been educated at a seminary.²⁹ Twelve had been to a university, and ten others had obtained some kind of formal higher education.³⁰ The Comte de Malartic³¹ had studied at the *Ecole Polytechnique*, and the Baron de Montbret³² was one of three diplomats who had been professors. Many of the nobles would undoubtedly have been privately tutored. The Foreign Ministry itself provided no formal diplomatic training. Some informal study of languages was, however, provided, with only the Warsaw, Madrid, and Constantinople embassies requiring independent interpreters.³³

The increasing shift of the Foreign Service towards relying on career diplomats can be seen in the statistics Whitcomb gives for the average number of years of experience of the diplomats under Napoleon. The average for an ambassador dipped from 11.4 years in 1800 to 7.4 years in 1805. This can be explained by the incorporation of generals into the diplomatic corps prior to the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars. It then rose to 14.1 years by 1812. For secretaries, their average period of service rose almost threefold, from 4.5 years in 1800 to 12.7

²⁹ Whitcomb, 45. One of our two diplomats, the Comte de Laforest, had studied at the famous *collège Louis-le-Grand* after his entry into the Foreign Ministry in late 1774, but prior to his appointment as secretary of the legation to Geneva in 1778. Laforest, I, ix.

³⁰ Charles Reinhard studied literature and theology under Goethe at the University of Tubingen, in Württemberg. Whitcomb, 45-6, 65.

³¹ “Guillemardet (Ferdinand Pierre Marie Dorothee, chevalier),” in Henri-Robert, 201.

³² He was named *professeur supplémentaire* of history and statistics for the *lycées* of Paris in 1804. “Coquebert de Montbret (Charles Etienne, baron),” in Henri-Robert, 150.

³³ The Foreign Ministry had created a School of Oriental Languages to train the *dragomen*, interpreters who specialized in eastern languages like Turkish and Arabic. The Madrid embassy also employed translators when the Comte de Laforest was ambassador there. By 1808, Laforest was probably fluent in English and German from his previous postings in the United States and Germany. Otto was presumably fluent in English following his time in the United States and England. Whitcomb, 46-7.

years in 1814. Although some secretaries tended to move from post to post, many remained in a particular embassy for years.³⁴ The administrative personnel of the Ministry also showed a significant increase in experience, from an average of 11.7 years in 1800 to seventeen years in 1814. These figures indicate that the rapid turn-over of personnel that marked the Foreign Ministry during the revolutionary years had ended, leaving a stable and increasingly experienced group.

The appointment or dismissal of an ambassador was the prerogative of Napoleon himself. He chose his ambassadors with care, weighing how each would do in a particular posting. While sometimes influenced by recommendations from those close to him, he usually chose diplomats on merit. Whitcomb records 111 ambassadorial appointments.³⁵ Of these, twenty-three were made by the emperor (twenty-one were generals, or friends and family). Of the rest, twelve were chosen from a list provided by the Foreign Minister; four came directly from the court; five were diplomats inherited from the Directory; twenty-five were promoted from the lower ranks of the Foreign Service by the Foreign Minister, and then approved by Napoleon. There is no information about the remaining twenty-one.

In cases involving the recall of a French diplomat, there were explicit, written procedures to be followed. A few diplomats (Whitcomb counts ten) did not want to remain at their posts, and requested recall. This was particularly the case with some of the generals, many of whom preferred to remain in the army. A few diplomats left for positions elsewhere in the government.³⁶ In some cases, an ambassador was recalled to put pressure on a foreign

³⁴ The longest posting for a secretary was that of Felix Auguste Desaugiers, First Secretary at Copenhagen, who served for twelve years. "Appendix V: The Diplomatic List, Part Two: Secretaries," in Whitcomb, 170.

³⁵ The data on appointments is drawn from Whitcomb, 63.

³⁶ In two cases a diplomat took over another Ministry, and in several others became prefects.

government, as in 1804, when several states refused to recognize Napoleon as emperor. At least five were removed for incompetence or bad conduct, including François Didelot, who was recalled from the Kingdom of Württemberg in 1806 because, in the words of Napoleon, “he [didn’t] know the ABCs of his trade.”³⁷ In these cases, the Ministry employed a formal process of removal.³⁸ A diplomat accused of malfeasance would go before a committee of five individuals appointed by the emperor.³⁹ The committee would submit a report and Napoleon would decide about the diplomat’s future. This suggests that at least on some occasions the Ministry had been transformed into an organization which operated by bureaucratic methods. But how and when exactly had the bureaucratization of the Ministry occurred?

The Bureaucratization of the Foreign Ministry

In 1800, when Talleyrand returned as Foreign Minister after Napoleon’s *coup*, he already had plans for the reorganization of the Ministry. He was determined to restore it to the greatness it had enjoyed prior to the Revolution.⁴⁰ In 1800, with the French Republic still at war with most

³⁷ Napoleon to Champagny. October 23, 1806. Archives Affaires Etrangères [Henceforth cited as AAE]. Mémoires et Documents France [henceforth cited as M+D France] 1779, fol. 58, cited in Whitcomb, 61. A second attempt was made to employ Didelot in 1807, this time as ambassador to Copenhagen. That appointment ended in failure as well, with Didelot being removed in 1811 for incompetence. It is unclear why he was kept on for so many years after his failure in Württemberg. Didelot’s lackluster career did not prevent Napoleon from appointing him prefect for the department of the Cher in March 1813. “Didelot (François Charles Luce, baron),” in Henri-Robert, 174-5.

³⁸ See, “Order of 3 Floréal An VIII (April 23, 1800).” AAE. M+D France Vol. 518, fol. 300-3. For several examples of the removal of diplomats from their posts, see Henri-Robert, 38-41.

³⁹ The accused was also allowed to present a justification of his conduct to the committee.

⁴⁰ Charles Reinhard had assumed the post of Foreign Minister after Talleyrand resigned in July 1799 (making him the only foreigner to hold that post in the history of France). He served until November, when

of Europe, the Ministry had been reduced to only nine missions. During the Revolution, each new minister had brought with him a new group of cronies, a situation that had a visible effect on its efficiency.⁴¹ Although Napoleon placed a number of family members and associates in the Foreign Service over the course of his reign, this did not affect the relative stability of the service during that reign.

The chaos of the revolutionary period, followed by greater stability after 1799, was not unique to the Foreign Ministry. The War Ministry, the subject of Howard Brown's work, also underwent a period of "formal rationalization."⁴² Catherine Kawa's *Les ronds-de-cuir en révolution: les employés de ministère du l'intérieur sous la première république (1792-1800)* presents a similar history in the Interior Ministry. Yet both Kawa and Brown argue that while both ministries had become more bureaucratic by the end of the Napoleonic era, they still did not resemble a modern bureaucracy.

The same was true of the Foreign Ministry. Although Talleyrand made a great show of rationalizing its workings, old patterns of nepotism, favoritism (and his own massive corruption) continued to exist. His Report of 1800 promised a thoroughgoing reorganization.⁴³ It began by

Talleyrand was reappointed.

⁴¹ Frédéric Masson provides an excellent and useful account of the various reorganizations of the Ministry in the revolutionary era in *Le département des affaires étrangères pendant la Révolution, 1787-1804*.

⁴² As Brown notes, the War Ministry underwent at least three major re-organizations between 1792 and 1799, with more than ten separate individuals serving as Minister during this period. Howard G. Brown. *War, Revolution and the Bureaucratic State: Politics and Army Administration in France, 1791-9* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 265-89. Everett Dague covers this transformation in greater detail in his study of the bureaucracy of the Ministry of War: Everett Thomas Dague. *Napoleon and the First Empire's Ministries of War and Military Administration: the Construction of a Military Bureaucracy* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006).

⁴³ "Rapport au Premier Consul de la République, par le Ministre des Relations Extérieures." *Germinal An*

describing the disorganization he had found when he entered the Ministry. Now, under the First Consul, he insisted, the time was right to put a new organization in place. Following his unhappy experiences as Foreign Minister under the Directory (from 1797 to 1799), Talleyrand promised to transform the diplomatic corps through a rational system of promotions. In this way it would be possible to “reject the inept or overly ambitious, stamp out the importunities of patronage, and reward experience, virtue, and talent.”⁴⁴

Under the new scheme, approved in April 1800, a new class of aspirants was to be selected from all of France through an examination system, rather than from the small number of families that had traditionally served the nation.⁴⁵ Napoleon intended to choose France’s future diplomats from those who passed the exam. In this way it was hoped that he would have a diplomatic corps personally loyal to him, since they would owe their careers to him. This was born out by the fact that those diplomats who had joined the Foreign Service prior to the Revolution tended to be among the more independent in the service.

Following his initial training in procedure, diplomatic history and practices, the aspirant would receive the rank of student, and receive his first posting abroad. He might then look forward to promotion as Secretary of Legation Second Class, First Class, Minister Plenipotentiary, and Ambassador, each with a fixed salary.⁴⁶ All promotions were to be decided

VIII (March-April 1800). AAE. M+D France Vol. 518, fol. 298-300. For the full text of the report see “Document II-C: Report of Foreign Minister Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord to First Consul Napoleon Bonaparte, April 23, 1800,” in Appendix II.

⁴⁴ “Rapport au Premier Consul,” fol. 299. By “overly ambitious,” Talleyrand probably meant any bourgeois who wanted to rise above his station.

⁴⁵ “Extrait des Registres des Délibérations de la République.” 3 Floréal An VIII de la République (April 23, 1800). AAE. M+D France Vol. 518, fol. 300-3.

⁴⁶ A different system of ranks was used for consular officers and for the administrative bureaucracy of the

on the basis of written reports, although the First Consul could also intervene.⁴⁷

None of this was to be. Talleyrand's own venality and snobbery prevented it. Despite all pretenses, he undermined his own policy by filling posts through patronage, as well as by promoting diplomats already in the Service, thus recruiting largely "in house." It is no wonder that some studies of the Ministry have tended to see the reorganization implemented by Talleyrand as a return to pre-revolutionary forms. (In fact, it would not be until the 1930s that the Foreign Ministry adopted competitive civil service exams as a means of recruitment.)

It is all the more remarkable then that Whitcomb regards Talleyrand's reforms as advancing the bureaucratization of the foreign service:

Basically, Napoleon's diplomatic service constituted a hierarchy of fixed and paid offices, staffed by trained professional diplomats, appointed and promoted on the basis of ability and experience, [and] fulfilling their functions on the basis of established rules and policies...⁴⁸

Whitcomb further argues that the Napoleonic diplomatic corps was not only a "modern" bureaucracy; it was also an "excellent" bureaucracy.⁴⁹ As an 1808 report from the head of the Political Section stated, "The emperor must be served. His orders must be executed, [and] the instructions of the Ministry must be followed: this is clearly laid down."⁵⁰ From Napoleon's

Ministry in Paris, though here too there was a clear hierarchy of ranks and salaries.

⁴⁷ Salaries did vary depending on where the diplomat was posted. Serving at the more important embassies (Vienna or St. Petersburg) came with a commensurately higher salary. At one extreme, Armand de Caulaincourt, Ambassador to Russia, received a salary of 480,000 francs per year, and at the other extreme, a Secretary at one of the smaller legations received 4,000 francs. Whitcomb, 79-84.

⁴⁸ Whitcomb, 156-7.

⁴⁹ Whitcomb, 155.

⁵⁰ *Rapport à Son Excellence le ministre des relations extérieures (Signé, Gérard de Rayneval, d'Hauterive, L Mornard (January 20, 1808)* (Paris: Impr. Impériale, 1808), cited in Henri-Robert, 39.

perspective, it might therefore have appeared that his newly created Foreign Service, however imperfectly recruited, was a useful tool in running the empire, since he could dictate policies that would be carried out without complaint, as though ordering soldiers on a battlefield.

He was mistaken. Total bureaucratic uniformity was not possible. Though he could hardly have known it at the time, it was not even desirable. Both case studies show time and again that Otto and Laforest chose to oppose the Ministry and modify imperial policies because they believed that to slavishly enforce its dictates would lead to the failure of their missions. Unrelieved exploitation in their view would have left the empire with no collaborators within the satellites, and without collaborators the empire could not function. Laforest was less than honest when he said “an ambassador has neither goals nor character of his own except those of his government, and must incorporate the views of his sovereign into his speech and thought.”⁵¹ Thus, while bureaucratic reform did allow the Ministry in Paris to deal with an increased flow of information and documentation, the attempt to enforce uniform policies in the satellites using the Foreign Service ultimately failed due to the independence of the diplomats themselves.

This still leaves several important questions to be answered regarding how the empire functioned. To what extent was the execution of some imperial orders through the Ministry successful? Did the system work differently in Spain and Bavaria? And finally, to what degree did Napoleon’s ambassadors help shape imperial policy? These will be answered in the remaining chapters of this dissertation. But in order to do this, we must first delineate the areas in which Napoleon’s diplomats acted in the satellite states.

The Duties of Imperial Diplomacy

⁵¹ Laforest, I, xxiii.

Edward Whitcomb has identified at least eight activities that Napoleon's agents pursued, in addition to the four or five in which diplomats have traditionally engaged: representing one's government, gathering information, supervising consular officials, negotiating treaties, and helping to maintain the peace. The eight activities unique to the Napoleonic Foreign Service were: influencing other governments, spreading Napoleonic/revolutionary ideology and institutions (although as we will see, this was from the emperor's point of view a minor priority), assisting France's armies, policing trade, collecting tribute from France's allies and enemies, influencing public opinion, and protecting French property. One would like to add one more item to Whitcomb's list: the systematic plundering of Europe's works of art (a topic that will be discussed in Chapter Eight).

Important distinctions need to be made between the role of French diplomacy in Bavaria and Spain. This reflects the vastly different situations of the two satellites. Bavaria became a part of the Napoleonic Empire in August 1805. Prior to this time the Foreign Ministry had not exerted much influence there. Even after the establishment of a formal Franco-Bavarian alliance, the country remained relatively independent in domestic affairs, although the direction of foreign policy was basically ceded to France.

In contrast, the period of Laforest's Spanish embassy (1808-13) reflected the methods by which Spain was incorporated into the empire, namely through military invasion. The Spanish navy had already been subordinated to the French after 1795, and Spain had been forced to pay a subsidy to France beginning in 1803. Laforest would (very occasionally) treat Spain as a collection of conquered provinces rather than as an independent state. Over time, the authority of Joseph's government was reduced to a small area around Madrid (the rest of Spain having

fallen under the authority of the army).⁵² This meant that Laforest's authority too was largely severely restricted. While the circumstances were drastically different from Bavaria, certain elements of diplomacy remained the same.

Even when Joseph Bonaparte, frequently at odds with his domineering brother, attempted to deny Laforest any influence over the Spanish court and government, the ambassador found other ways to influence Spanish politics. He gathered a group of reform-minded Spaniards in the government to create a "French party." In Bavaria, where Otto's relationship with the monarch and government remained cordial and collaborative, finding collaborators was that much easier.

Because of this collaborative atmosphere, direct coercion was rarely used against a satellite government. But threats were always implicit.⁵³ While local rulers certainly did complain (and sometimes used methods of passive resistance), they generally yielded to French demands for money and soldiers. This was central to the empire's basic policies: first, to shift the burdens of war as much as possible onto the satellites; and second, to maximize economic profit and benefits for France. The emperor in particular was anxious that no real concession be made in favor of a particular satellite that might then be used by others to demand similar treatment. In the one case where Otto objected to exploitation, Napoleon himself rejected any attempt to lessen the burdens.⁵⁴ More generally, the standard response of French diplomats to

⁵² This of course does not include Spanish territory controlled by the British or the Spanish rebels.

⁵³ The direct annexation of the Kingdom of Holland to the French Empire in 1810 was the most blatant example of coercion. The primary intent was to tighten the customs regime in the area, which had been both lax and corrupt under the reign of Napoleon's brother Louis. See André Palluel-Guillard, "Hollande," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 963-4.

⁵⁴ The case in question was an attempt to obtain a French subsidy for the Bavarian treasury in 1809. Within weeks, Napoleon replied that the idea was ridiculous, and ordered Otto to never mention it again. The exchange about the subsidy will be examined in more detail in Chapter Three.

complaints was both delay and deception about the emperor's ultimate plans for Europe.

Statement of Method, Sources and Organization

As mentioned above, this dissertation relies on two case studies of the role of French embassies in two of the most important satellite states of the French Empire, the Kingdoms of Spain and Bavaria. These countries were chosen because of the different ways they became part of the Napoleonic Empire, and their different reactions to it. Bavaria allied with Napoleon in 1805, while Spain was forcibly brought into the empire in 1808, and while Bavaria remained a loyal ally of Napoleon until just before the battle of Leipzig, most Spaniards chose to fight the French from the first. These diametrically opposed responses to the Napoleonic encounter allow us to see how the imperial system reacted to very different circumstances. Equally important is this work's contribution to our understanding of why some of the local elites collaborated with Napoleon, and in particular how their desires for reform inclined them to work with the rapacious French. As such, this dissertation might be a first step in the study of how French diplomats abroad were the most important agents in finding local collaborators. Research on additional diplomats should further our understanding in this regard.

The correspondence of Otto's and Laforest's embassies provides the primary source for this work. The *Dictionnaire des diplomates de Napoléon* was used for additional information about the ambassadors' backgrounds and careers.⁵⁵ Where appropriate, the correspondence and memoirs of Napoleon and other major historical figures were also used.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Jacques Henri-Robert. *Dictionnaire des diplomates de Napoléon* (Paris: Kronos, 1990)

⁵⁶ Napoléon I. *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier; publiée par ordre de l'empereur Napoléon III* [Henceforth cited as *Correspondance*], 32 Vols. (Paris: Plon, 1858-70). The "official" collection of Napoleon's correspondence remains the most important, though it must be supplemented by additional sources, due to the considerable editing done under the Second Empire to protect the reputation of the Bonaparte family. It is currently being replaced by the more complete Napoléon I.

Secondary sources include studies of Bavarian and Spanish history during the Napoleonic and Revolutionary periods. These are supplemented by biographical sources on some of the people associated with the period. Articles from the *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, edited by Jean Tulard, have also provided analyses and statistics on important topics. Marcel Dunan's *Napoléon et l'Allemagne: Le système continental et les débuts du Royaume de Bavière, 1806-1810* has proved to be an especially valuable source.⁵⁷ The dissertations of Xavier Magescas and Rafael Cortada on Spain in the Napoleonic era were equally important in helping to explain how the collaborationist government in that country interacted with Laforest.⁵⁸

Chapter Two defines several key terms in this dissertation. It also explores the historiography of the empire. Chapter Three examines how Otto ushered Bavaria into an alliance with France in 1805, and then managed its integration into the Napoleonic Empire. Chapter Four shows how it was then subjected to the military and economic exploitation that was the empire's *modus operandi*. Chapter Five covers Otto's interaction with the Bavarian government in domestic matters, including on the implementation of various reforms. Chapter Six explores the socio-economic background of Spain prior to 1808, as well as the events that led to the French intervention, all of which contributed

Correspondance générale de Napoléon Ier [Henceforth cited as *Correspondance générale*], 7 Vols., published by La Fondation Napoléon. (Paris: Fayard, 2004-9). It currently covers the period through December 1807. The recent collection by Vincent Haeghele of correspondence with Joseph Bonaparte has also been used. Vincent Haeghele. *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance intégrale, 1784-1818* (Paris: Fayard, 2007). [Henceforth cited as *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*]

⁵⁷ Marcel Dunan. *Napoléon et l'Allemagne: Le système continental et les débuts du Royaume de Bavière, 1806-1810* (Paris: Plon, 1943).

⁵⁸ Xavier Abebarry Magescas. "Le gouvernement central de l'Espagne sous Joseph Bonaparte (1808-1813): effectivité des institutions monarchiques de la justice royale" (PhD. dissertation, Université de Paris-Val-de-Marne, 2001); Rafael Leon Cortada. "The Government of Spain under Joseph Bonaparte, 1808-1814" (PhD. diss., Fordham University, 1968).

to the environment in which Laforest had to work. Chapter Seven shows how he was able to assert influence over the Spanish government, as well as over Joseph himself, in furthering the exploitation of the satellite. Chapter Eight traces Laforest's efforts to maintain French exploitation, including the shipment of Spanish art to Paris. Chapter Nine explores his role in Spain's domestic politics, as well as his interactions with French generals and officials. Chapter Ten summarizes the findings of the entire dissertation and draws conclusions from a comparison of the two cases.

Conclusion

France's imperial diplomats were not only bureaucrats. They also acted on their own initiative to shape imperial policies, even if this meant occasionally violating direct orders. Circumstances forced both Otto and Laforest to be more independent than Napoleon might have wished. But circumstances also forced them to be more dependent on local reforming elites than they might at first have imagined. Napoleon, and perhaps the ambassadors, too, might have expected diplomacy in the satellite nations to be no more than the transmission of orders against which all resistance was futile. This in fact was sometimes true, but not always. The ambassadors were charged with imposing Napoleon's will on local elites who were themselves used to command, and who had various and divergent ambitions and plans. French representatives on the spot had to hone and soften commands from Paris with all the subtlety (and practicality) of real diplomacy to make them acceptable to local leaders, without whose support little could be achieved. At the same time native elites had their own aims that had to be appeased, or at least entertained, in however limited a way. An imperious dictator like Napoleon might have been unwilling to compromise. His agents on the spot could not afford to be so obdurate. Both ambassadors therefore had to mediate between pressures from above and

demands from below. They had, to the best of their abilities, to appease all parties if the empire were to function effectively. In doing so, they were transformed, becoming independent actors who through diplomacy were able to achieve much. Napoleon had hoped for clerks. He got proconsuls.

Chapter Two: Imperial Diplomacy and the True Nature of the Napoleonic Empire

The question of the Napoleonic Empire's true nature has been the subject of considerable debate in recent decades. This chapter explains how this dissertation fits into this larger historiographical question: how the empire was created, and how the French ran it. It focuses in particular on the question of whether the primary goal of the empire was cultural imperialism and the spread of a Napoleonic-revolutionary model of reform and administration, or was it merely the exploitation of satellite states for the benefit of France? The correspondence of the Bavarian and Spanish embassies clearly suggests that provision of soldiers and money was its main aim. But first, this chapter will define several important terms that are central to this discussion, including "empire," "imperialism," and "satellite."

Definitions

As defined by historian Charles S. Maier, "An empire in the classic sense is usually believed, first[,] to expand by conquest or coercion, and second[,] to control the loyalty of the territories it subjugates."¹ The Napoleonic Empire conforms to this, having been created first through the military conquests of the French Republic after 1793 and later by Napoleon himself, and then ruled either directly or through puppet governments.

To use the definition of sociologist Johan Galtung, imperialism is a power relationship between an imperial state and one or more peripheral nations or regions, with the former restricting the freedom of action of the latter, and taking for itself the dominant position.² In this relationship, actions of

¹ Charles S. Maier. *Among Empires: American Ascendancy and its Predecessors* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 24-5.

² Johan Galtung, "A Structural Theory of Imperialism," in *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd., 1971), 81.

subordinate nations are restricted by the center to maximize its own advantages.³ This definition seems appropriate, as divisions between core and periphery under Napoleon were quite stark, since the financial and manpower burdens of the Empire were consistently shifted to the latter.

Immanuel Wallerstein's world systems theory takes a longer view, defining, but also explaining, imperialism as a natural outgrowth of sixteenth-century capitalism, which created a new series of relationships between weaker peripheral regions or states and stronger core states. According to him, the development after 1450 of a world capitalist economy created new divisions of labor between core and peripheral regions, allowing the former to extract surplus resources in an unequal manner.⁴ Imperialism was only a variant of these unequal relationships, being based on direct military occupation of weaker nations. Capitalist or proto-capitalist elites on the periphery, also seeking to profit from the world economy, collaborated with the dominant elites to benefit from an equally ruthless appropriation of surplus labor value generated within core states.

Many historians have taken issue with Wallerstein, pointing out that he does not take into account cultural and organizational differences between core nations, while regarding the dominance of the core as being so hegemonic as to be unbreakable. More importantly for our specific cases, his argument does not adequately explain why some countries collaborated with Napoleon while others opposed him. Finally, Wallerstein only pays lip service to non-economic forms of exploitation in his

³ The Continental System was of course a classic example of the efforts of an imperial center to restrict the economic relations of its subordinate nations.

⁴ See Immanuel Wallerstein. *The Modern World System*, 3 Vols. (New York: Academic Press, 1974-89); and Wallerstein, *Geopolitics and Geoculture: Essays on the Changing World-System* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991). For a critical and incisive analysis, see Theda Skocpol, "Wallerstein's World Capitalist System: A Theoretical and Historical Critique," in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 82. No. 5. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 1075-90.

definition of imperialism that played an important role in the Napoleonic Empire.⁵

Drawing on these two definitions, I shall propose a third synthetic definition—that of imperialism as an unequal power relationship between an imperial core and peripheral regions based on direct military rule, with the core controlling the economic and political life of the peripheral states. I will refer to the subordinate states as satellites throughout. Having dealt with these key terms, it is now necessary to turn to the wider historiography of the Napoleonic Empire, and its Foreign Ministry.

Historiography

For the first century and a half after its fall, the diplomatic history of the empire was mostly the subject of huge, multi-volume studies that focused broadly on the period, often beginning with the French Revolution. The authors of these are some of the great names in Napoleonic history: Adolphe Thiers, J. Edouard Driault and Louis Madelin.⁶ While their works did consider the satellite states in the diplomacy of the period, the influence of Napoleon's personality and genius was emphasized. Outside the Continental System and the recruitment of soldiers, the interaction of the satellites with French diplomats was not explored in much detail. Although valuable, these works focused on the high politics of wars and alliances, ignoring for the most part the day-to-day activities that diplomats performed to make the empire function.

⁵ Wallerstein does address issues of cultural imperialism, but only in terms of a hegemonic Western culture that served to spread the capitalist system across the world through claims about modernization and the advancement of civilization. See Wallerstein, *Geopolitics and Geoculture*, 139-183, 215-30.

⁶ Adolphe Thiers. *History of the Consulate and the Empire of France under Napoleon*, translated by D. Forbes Campbell, 20 Vols. (London: H. Coburn, 1845-62); J. E. Driault. *Napoleon et l'Europe*, 5 Vols. (Paris: F. Alcan, 1910-1927); Driault, *Napoléon en Italie (1800-1812)* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1906); Louis Madelin. *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, 14 Vols. (Paris: Hachette, 1937-54).

During the twentieth century, the treatment of the sister republics by revolutionary France became the subject of several studies. Among these are Jacques Godechot's *La Grande Nation: l'expansion révolutionnaire de la France dans le monde, 1789-1799*, R.R. Palmer's *The Age of the Democratic Revolution*, and Sidney Biro's *The German Policy of Revolutionary France: A Study in French Diplomacy during the war of the First Coalition 1792-1797*.⁷ They highlighted the exploitative and often brutal methods used by revolutionary commissioners and generals in the republics created by French armies. Still, diplomats and the Foreign Ministry still remained of lesser importance.

Starting in the 1960s, historians of the former satellite nations began writing local studies from the perspective of the governed. This in turn led to the first comprehensive, comparative study of the empire, Owen Connelly's *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms*.⁸ Using the studies written since World War II, Connelly provided a succinct summary of Napoleon's policies in the satellite states. He emphasized both the military foundation of the empire, and the reforms he believes the French were supposed to have brought. While representing an important step in exploring the circumstances of the empire's governance, Connelly, like his predecessors, paid no particular attention to the role of the Foreign Ministry or its agents abroad.

Edward Whitcomb's *Napoleon's Diplomatic Service* is quite different, in dealing with the Ministry's central role. It provides a detailed analysis of the organization and personnel of the French Foreign Service. Whitcomb was able to demonstrate the many ways in which the Foreign Ministry exerted a degree of control over the satellites. In so doing, he provides an overview of the connections

⁷ R.R. Palmer. *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: a Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800*, 2 Vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959-64; Sidney S. Biro. *The German Policy of Revolutionary France. A Study in French Diplomacy during the War of the First Coalition 1792-1797*, 2 Vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957).

⁸ Owen Connelly. *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms* (New York: Free Press, 1965).

between them and the Ministry, although he did not explore the methods used by diplomats in sufficient detail. He also curiously de-emphasized the central role of exploitation in the imperial system.

If one has to point to a single work that transformed the historiographical debate regarding the Napoleonic Empire, it was Stuart J. Woolf's *Napoleon's Integration of Europe*.⁹ Woolf focuses on the mechanisms of control created by the empire as well as their pan-European effects. He argues that Napoleon's officials (including diplomats) had a common vision that encompassed French nationalism and cultural imperialism, as well as an administrative model of uniformity and modernity. The reforms imposed on the satellites included an efficient, "modern" administration and bureaucracy distinguished by recruitment and promotion according to merit, the elimination of seigneurial rights, the protection of individuals and their property from arbitrary rule, and the creation of a new, stable revolutionary-Napoleonic order.¹⁰ According to Woolf, the French expected that the peoples of Europe, having received these reforms, would embrace the empire in gratitude for improving their lives.

Woolf portrays the empire as seeking to obliterate backward, *ancien régime* societies for the benefit of (almost) all. The papers of some French officials do in fact evoke "the regeneration" of nations and the transformation of "slaves into men."¹¹ Others reveal officials who saw themselves as emancipators, struggling to erase what they regarded as centuries of oppressive customs. As a report on the reorganization of the Grand Duchy of Berg noted:

It will surely require time and effort to create a *patrie* [out of] these people

⁹ Stuart Woolf. *Napoleon's Integration of Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

¹⁰ Some historians would add religious toleration as well.

¹¹ Archives Nationales [Henceforth cited as AN] AF/IV/1225, dossier 1809, doc. 10, "Bulletin du Grand Duché de Berg: 1ère semaine de mars 1809," cited in Michael Rapport, "'The Germans are Hydrophobes': Germany and the Germans in the Shaping of French Identity," in *The Bee and the Eagle: Napoleonic France and the End of the Holy Roman Empire, 1806*, edited by Alan Forrest and Peter H. Wilson. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 242.

gathered... from ten or twelve different jurisdictions and amongst whom... there has occurred no revolution, [which though terrible, is a] very rapid method of educat[ing] a people.¹²

These bureaucrats believed that societies could actually be transformed from above by small groups of foreign officials. Woolf's ultimate conclusion is that the empire succeeded in integrating Europe, even in the face of very significant resistance from the majority it governed. Yet he too discounted the place of Napoleon's diplomats in these efforts, discussing only their role in the gathering of information and dissemination of propaganda. No mention is made of their involvement in the politics or government of the satellites.

Michael Broers' *Europe under Napoleon, 1799-1815* built upon Woolf's work.¹³ Broers emphasized a common, enlightened ideology that both French and foreigners shared. According to him, French officials defined the policies of centralization, bureaucratization of government and occasional imposition of the Code Napoleon as "enlightened" and "liberal" without thinking much about the effect these would have on the masses of people they ruled. Because he was writing a general history, Broers mentions Napoleon's diplomats only in passing, although he agrees they did play some role in governing the empire.

Charles Esdaile and Geoffrey Ellis, as well as others, have more recently challenged the claims of Woolf and Broers that cultural imperialism was the most important aim of the empire, suggesting instead its purpose was primarily to facilitate Napoleon's wars.¹⁴ In this regard it was, as Ellis puts it,

¹² Rapport, 243.

¹³ Michael Broers. *Europe under Napoleon, 1799-1815* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

¹⁴ Geoffrey Ellis, "The Nature of Napoleonic Imperialism," in *Napoleon and Europe*, edited by Philip G. Dwyer. (New York: Longman, 2000), 197-117; Ellis, *The Napoleonic Empire* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1991); Ellis, *Napoleon: Profiles in Power*; Charles Esdaile. *Napoleon's Wars: An International History, 1803-1815* (New York: Viking, 2007).

little more than a “spoils system.”¹⁵ Subordinate nations were intended to be both a continual source of exploitable resources as well as a buffer between France and its enemies.

Pierre Branda, in support of these arguments, has estimated what the empire managed to collect from the satellites, as well as the savings enjoyed by France through the use of allied military contingents.¹⁶ The figures are impressive. More than 807 million francs (350 million from Spain alone) helped pay for the French armies, while another 428 million was paid directly to the French treasury. The use of foreign auxiliaries between 1805 and 1813 produced a further savings of 253.7 million.¹⁷ Altogether, this, with additional levies, resulted in a total of 1,853.1 million francs, almost equal to two years of the empire’s total budget (or almost forty-five percent of France’s war-related expenses between 1803 and 1814.)¹⁸

Branda’s work indicates both the scale and importance of exploitation in the imperial system. For the satellites, the financial burdens were enormous. Bavaria was driven almost to bankruptcy by 1809; the Spanish treasury was effectively bankrupt by 1812, and subsisted thereafter only on a small

¹⁵ The following section draws primarily on Ellis, “The Nature of Napoleonic Imperialism,” in *Napoleon and Europe*, 97-117.

¹⁶ Pierre Branda, “La guerre a-t-elle payé la guerre?,” in *Napoléon et l’Europe: Regards sur une politique. Actes du colloque organisé par la direction des archives du ministère des affaires étrangères et la Fondation Napoléon. 18 et 19 novembre 2004*, coordonné par Thierry Lentz. (Paris: Fayard, 2005), 258-73.

¹⁷ Branda’s figures are based on what it would have cost the French Empire to raise and equip a similar number of French soldiers. Branda, 267-8.

¹⁸ These figures do not include the additional taxes collected by the French Empire from the territory France had annexed after 1792. Branda notes that these additional receipts in the 1811 budget was 154 million francs, or approximately fifteen percent of the total budget of the French Empire for that year. “Table: Comptes du Trésor de l’Empire pour l’an 1811. Détails des recettes et dépenses des territoires annexés,” in Branda, 265; and “Table: Détails du financement extraordinaire de la guerre de l’an XI (1803) à 1814,” in Branda, 271.

monthly subsidy provided by the French. These financial strains made it unlikely that the empire could have existed for much longer than it did without substantial changes. However, if the empire was simply intended to extract large numbers of soldiers and money from its erstwhile allies, it was clearly a success.

Alexander Grab has attempted most recently to reconcile Woolf's and Ellis' points of view, arguing that both the spoils system and cultural imperialism were important factors in the empire, and that it is impossible to privilege one argument over the other.¹⁹ While Napoleon's primary aim, according to him, was to extract soldiers and money, the methods (and reforms) the French used to achieve these goals were in large part determined by a revolutionary ideology. Even so, the dominant historiographical debate today remains between proponents of the cultural imperialism model and those who insist that exploitation was Napoleon's central aim. Both arguments will be considered in greater detail later in this dissertation.

If the nature of the Napoleonic Empire remains the subject of intense debate, there is little doubt how and why the empire was first created. It grew out of the territories acquired by the Republic prior to November 1799; the earliest satellites had been created during the rule of the Committee of Public Safety.²⁰ The Napoleonic empire was thus to some extent inherited from the Committee, as well as from the Directory. An explanation of how the French Republic had acquired its satellites, and the means by which they were governed, is therefore necessary before other matters are considered.

¹⁹ Alexander Grab. *Napoleon and the Transformation of Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

²⁰ The Committee of Public Safety was the de facto executive of the French state, acting in the name of the National Convention, between April 1793 and September 1795, when it was officially abolished.

The Legacy of the French Republic and the Nature of the Napoleonic Empire

France in the early years of the Republic had been at war with almost all the great powers of Europe. Its empire began with the conquest of the Austrian Netherlands. At first, the direct annexation of territory was limited to those territories that would achieve France's so-called "natural frontiers" - the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees. To go further, it was believed, would jeopardize the political stability of the Republic.²¹ The creation of sister republics beyond these frontiers was in part an effort to answer arguments against expansionism, since it could be claimed that with their creation, France was not expanding inordinately, but only extending the blessings of liberty to other peoples.

The conquests themselves were a consequence of the success of the republican armies against the Allied First Coalition.²² There was no larger plan behind this, other than an effort to keep potential invaders away from France's borders. The first "sister" republic was born when in 1793 the Netherlands was transformed into the Batavian Republic.

By the time of the Peace of Campo-Formio in 1797-8, the French had not only managed to force Prussia, Spain, and Sardinia out of the war, but had also occupied all of Italy and Switzerland.²³ To secure those territories, pro-French governments, created with the help of small groups of local republicans, were installed, with the French typically imposing the Constitution of the Year III (later

²¹ On the natural frontiers, see Peter Sahlins, "Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries since the Seventeenth Century," *American Historical Review* no. 95 (1990): 1423-51.

²² The Wars of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era are generally referred to by the six Allied Coalitions formed to fight France between 1793 and 1815. The First was in 1792-1797, followed by the Second (1798-1801), the Third (1804-1805), the Fourth (1806-1807), the Fifth (1808-1809), and the Sixth (1812-1814).

²³ Napoleon's attempt to expand the French sphere of influence through the Peace of Amiens in 1801-3 was therefore only a repetition of what the Directory had done in 1797-8.

replaced by the Constitution of the Year VIII) on them.²⁴ The Directory relied on those governments to execute its policies. In this way, an informal empire based on indirect rule, officially called a “federative system,” was created.

According to Tim Blanning, this was the only strategy France could follow. As he observes, “if the French conquest of Europe had been based solely on brute force, it could not have lasted long... There were no longer enough Frenchmen available to keep the Belgians, Dutch, Germans, Spanish, and Italians under control. One of the most inspired inventions of revolutionary politics, therefore, turned out to be the satellite state, a device for maximizing international control with a minimum of metropolitan effort.”²⁵ The French leadership was obliged to embark on the difficult course of convincing thousands of Europeans that by collaborating with them, they would enjoy the benefits of revolutionary reforms that promised to sweep away everything from seigniorial rights to religious discrimination. These collaborators were then to be managed by French officials capable of simultaneously exploiting and appeasing the republican elements in these early satellites. Napoleon’s diplomats in some ways therefore inherited this policy of making the empire pay for itself through indirect rule, even after many of the subordinate states were transformed into monarchies.²⁶

²⁴ In the case of the Roman Republic, Merlin de Douai, charged with writing its new constitution, simply took a pocket edition of the Constitution of the Year III and substituted “Roman” for “French” for most of the articles. Some additional articles were added and others removed, but in the end the Roman Constitution was essentially a copy of the French. Andrew J.S. Jainchill. *Reimagining Politics after the Terror: the Republican Origins of French Liberalism*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2008), 178-9.

²⁵ T.C.W. Blanning. *The French Revolutionary Wars 1787-1802* (New York: Arnold, 1996), 169.

²⁶ This was in keeping with Napoleon’s predilection for monarchical government after 1804. Most of the remaining sister republic were annexed by France, while the Cisalpine and Batavian Republics became the Kingdoms of Italy and Holland. Only the Helvetian Republic survived after 1805. No new republics were created thereafter.

This strategy was difficult to maintain even from the first. Revolutionary propaganda claimed that the relationship between France and the sister republics was benevolent. In fact, the satellites were already being forced to provide financial “contributions,” as well as to quarter and supply French soldiers at their own expense. Internal documents were frank about the need for them to bear the cost of France’s wars against Europe’s monarchies. As early as October 1794, the instructions of the Committee of Public Safety to their agents stationed in Belgium stated that: “You will treat the country as a conquered nation... despoil Belgium of its subsistence, of cloth, and of leather, as well as of all that can be of use to us...”²⁷

Exploitation continued unabated after the creation of the Directory in 1795. A report by Jean-François Reubell, the member of the Directory most closely associated with foreign affairs, makes the intent of the French government clear: “[For] whoever governs the Cisalpine Republic,... the most important thing is that the acts of the French Executive Directory are [to be] executed, regardless of whether they are good or bad. All is lost if, [even] once, the [French] government [is] demeaned and not obeyed.”²⁸ The overall balance sheet for this period is impressive—in Italy alone General Bonaparte in 1796 extracted more than forty-five million francs in cash, plus twelve million more in precious metals

²⁷ “Instructions du Comité de Salut Public [signé par Lazare Carnot et Prieur de la Côte-d’Or] aux Représentants près les Armées du Nord et de Sambre-et-Meuse,” 3 Octobre 1794, cited in Sorel, Vol. IV, 150. The extraction of money also began in this period, usually in the form of forced loans levied by *Représentants en Mission* (officials appointed by the Committee of Public Safety) on various cities and towns in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany. Certain *Représentants* also instructed the sister republics on broad matters of policy, a role that was the sole preserve of France’s diplomatic corps after 1799.

²⁸ Reubell, untitled, undated jottings [the reference to the Cisalpine Republic means it must have been between 1797 and 1799], Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 23654, fol. 378, cited in Jainchill, 187.

and jewels.²⁹

Napoleon thus inherited from the Directory both the satellite states and a militarized France capable of raising and equipping huge armies.³⁰ He would use all of this in the War of the Third Coalition that began in 1804. It was also from that time on that Napoleon's tendency to solve problems of foreign relations with military force increasingly dominated French policy.³¹

This had not always been so. Napoleon as First Consul had no specific plan of conquest. Neither did he exhibit any desire for limitless domination, as many have later asserted. Still, he had by this time several fixed foreign policy goals. These were the defeat of Britain, the establishment of French hegemony in Europe, and a determination to never give up any territory controlled by France. All of these had their origins in the policies of the French Republic. (Indeed, some historians trace their roots back to the Bourbons. For them the Napoleonic Wars are merely the continuation of the ongoing war between France and Britain that had begun with Louis XIV.)

This last argument ignores the fundamental change in French policy under Napoleon. It is only after 1800 that French conquests take on a driven, almost daemonic quality. Some find explanation for this ruthless, relentless growth in Napoleon's own personality.³² Historian Philip Dwyer believes this is

²⁹ Blanning, 160.

³⁰ This was a result of the introduction of mass conscription, the famous *levée en masse*, in 1793. By 1794, more than a million Frenchmen were under arms. A more organized system of conscription was introduced with the *Loi Jourdan* in 1798, which was used until the end of the Napoleonic Wars. See François Monnier, "Conscription," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 487-98.

³¹ It should be noted that the other great powers of Europe pursued their own expansionist plans during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, although on a smaller scale than the French.

³² See Robert Tombs; Isabelle Tombs. *That Sweet Enemy: the French and the British from the Sun King to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 2007), 1-304; Jeremy Black. *Natural and Necessary Enemies: Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986).

central to an understanding of foreign policy in the new century. Dwyer focuses on three aspects of Napoleon's character—his drive for glory, his imagination that saw ever new possibilities for expansion, and his determination to treat defeated enemies harshly.

First, Napoleon saw his military successes as being the firmest foundation for his regime. He remarked on several occasions that he would be overthrown if he did not continue to provide the French with new victories. He also believed that destiny had called him to be France's savior, which led him to confuse his own interests with those of the nation. Second, Napoleon's military successes in the period of 1805-7 encouraged ever more fantastic aspirations, which in time led to more conquests. Finally, Napoleon tended to lash out vindictively when frustrated in international dealings, and saw warfare as the best solution to any problem.

Following the policies established by the Directory, the Napoleonic Empire was based on indirect rule.³³ Since this was more effective and less costly than direct annexation, the latter was used only when absolutely necessary.³⁴ The incorporation of newly acquired territory usually began shortly after the end of resistance and the restoration of order.³⁵ It is the argument of this dissertation that the French were almost always largely unconcerned about domestic reforms, allowing each satellite to introduce these at its own pace. The few that did interest them were designed to consolidate the authority of the central government. This included reducing the power of nobles and clergy, the elimination of internal barriers to trade, and the adoption of more efficient methods of taxation. In

³³ French laws were fully implemented in territories that were directly annexed to France, or in states Napoleon held up as models of reform, such as the kingdoms of Westphalia and Italy, and the Grand Duchy of Berg.

³⁴ The best example of this was the annexation in 1809-1810 of parts of the coastline of northern and southern Europe in an attempt to make the Continental System more effective.

³⁵ For a description of how the police (and in particular, the *gendarmerie*) were used to achieve this, see Michael Broers, "Policing the Empire: the Pacification of Europe," in *Napoleon and Europe*, 153-68.

instituting such changes, “what had remained only aspirations in even the most powerful of the eighteenth-century monarchies were finally put into practice in the systematic reorganization of the administrative, bureaucratic, and financial institutions... carried through [during] the brief period of French rule.”³⁶ After administrative changes had been completed, other reforms such as new law codes, or the establishment of religious toleration, might be pursued.³⁷

Exploitation and Reform in the Napoleonic Empire

Ellis emphasizes the short period in which the satellites were supposed to have been transformed by the Napoleonic model. Belgium was only under French rule for twenty years, and most of the satellites for much less than that. Most empires take much longer to impose their institutions and belief on a conquered people, so it is not surprising that there was no administrative uniformity in Europe at the end of the Empire, despite Woolf’s claims to the contrary.

In direct contrast to Woolf’s argument, it must also be noted that Napoleon’s policies sometimes even undermined the implementation of reforms. Satellites faced with bankruptcy could hardly pursue these reforms easily. In fact, the amount of time spent by the Foreign Ministry to convince satellites to implement reform was insignificant compared to that spent encouraging them to expand their armies, or to enforce the Continental System. Exploitation was brazenly practiced, and remained Paris’ primary concern. Reform was also weakened by the granting of *dotations* (estates taken from the Church or deposed monarchs) and their revenues by Napoleon to favored individuals in Poland, Germany, and Italy. These could not be taxed by local governments, denying millions in revenue to the subordinate

³⁶ John Anthony Davis. *Conflict and Control. Law and Order in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (London: Macmillan Education, 1988).

³⁷ For example, aspects of the Code Napoleon were incorporated into the Bavarian Constitution of 1808.

nations. Furthermore, Napoleon generally prevented them from exercising legal and administrative jurisdiction over the *dotations*, hardly a way to create either the uniform system of administration or reformed Europe that Woolf and Broers assert were important goals of the empire. In a similar way, the emperor placed certain lands under the jurisdiction of a special *Domaine Extraordinaire* created to provide funds for the army.³⁸ By the end of the empire, almost 6,000 *dotations* had been granted.³⁹

Even so, reforms were implemented everywhere to some degree. The extent depended on whether a particular nation was part of what Michael Broers refers to as the “inner empire,” made up of those states that had been brought into the French sphere prior to 1807, or those which came later.⁴⁰ The latter consisted of an “outer empire” more resistant to reform. Subsequent chapters of this dissertation will show how this inner/outer empire division helped determine the extent of domestic reforms. Of the two examples, Bavaria was in the inner empire, Spain in the outer. They can therefore be used to compare the nature and level of reform in substantially different environments.

Reforms were implemented most completely and forcibly by Napoleon only in those states such as Westphalia that were his own creation. Otherwise, they progressed the furthest, and lasted the longest, in those satellites where they were instituted by local governments without direct French intervention, (even if French cultural and political influence were certainly evident in them). However, they also could hardly have been extended as far as they were without the tacit support the French presence provided. In Bavaria, Maximilian Graf von Montgelas, the First Minister and primary

³⁸ The *Domaine Extraordinaire* was a special account established by Napoleon during the 1805 campaign, into which he deposited funds taken from France’s enemies. It later also included revenues of several government-run businesses, such as the mines of Istria. While used primarily to pay for military campaigns, the account was also used to reward friends.

³⁹ In the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, the *dotations* resulted in a loss of around twenty percent of potential tax revenues. The kingdom of Westphalia and the Grand Duchy of Berg suffered similar losses. Broers, *Europe under Napoleon*, 95.

⁴⁰ Broers’ best articulation of this argument can be found in Broers’ *Europe under Napoleon, 1799-1815*.

collaborator with the French, felt this support had contributed greatly to the success of the reforms he called “enlightened,” and which he had continuously championed between 1799 and 1817. It is also clear that the Bavarian government had used French revolutionary and Napoleonic reforms as a model for administrative reorganization.⁴¹ There is no evidence that Otto exerted any major influence in shaping them. Rather, he seems to have been a casual observer, although certainly offering advice when asked. Still, there is evidence of a very important tacit agreement that linked reform and exploitation. Local reformers received French support for reforms in exchange for facilitating the exploitation that was part of the Napoleonic Empire. It is this that made all other French activities in the satellites, from military reorganization to economic exploitation, possible.

The Imperial System and the Reorganization and Exploitation of the Satellite States

The one area that the French clearly were determined to reform was the satellite armies. This included training in French-style tactics and organization, and the introduction of mass conscription.⁴² In Bavaria, Otto literally went into the War Ministry in 1809 to dictate a French model of organization. To meet Napoleon’s continual need for money as well as soldiers, the French also encouraged the institution of an efficient tax system.⁴³

Economic exploitation was facilitated as well by the Continental System, and by high French

⁴¹ The Bavarian Concordat of 1817 is cited by Montgelas in his memoirs as one example where the French reforms of 1792-1815 were used as a model. For Montgelas’ career and biography the reader will have to wait until Chapter Three.

⁴² Conscription was never extended to Spain, where the French were already engaged in bitter fighting with both conventional and unconventional forces. However, a Spanish Royal Guard of over 10,000 men was raised by Napoleon’s brother Joseph, and was organized and trained in the French manner.

⁴³ For a short study on the adoption of the Napoleonic fiscal reforms throughout the Empire, see Alexander Grab, “State, Society and Tax Policy in Napoleonic Europe,” in *Napoleon and Europe*, 169-86.

tariffs. The clear intent was that foreign goods would be excluded from France, while French goods would flood the empire. When combined with the enormous war costs Napoleon forced on the satellites, many governments, including those of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, as well as the Kingdoms of Bavaria, Spain, Westphalia, and Holland, were driven to the brink of bankruptcy. The demands of empire were so heavy that certain satellite officials even requested that their state be directly annexed to France, so that they could escape Napoleon's more exploitative measures.

Despite their desperate financial situation, Napoleon almost always refused to reduce the war costs of his allies. If enlightened reform had been his primary goal, the satellites would not have been taxed as they were. Woolf, although acknowledging that military and economic exploitation was an important part of the imperial system, also insists that these policies were designed to be temporary. In fact, there are few signs that the French would have given up the unfair trading practices they had imposed, even after peace had been established. Policies favoring France were always given priority, no matter how much the satellites suffered.

Conclusions

Exploitation was the primary goal of the Napoleonic Empire. Both Otto and Laforest spent most of their time convincing Bavarian and Spanish elites to accede to innumerable exploitative policies, while attempting to appease them with sympathetic hearings and promises of future amelioration. When the financial burdens of exploitation seemed to threaten ruin, both ambassadors were moved to seek relief, despite objections from the Ministry in Paris, and in one case, from Napoleon himself. In Spain, this resulted in a small financial subsidy. While little relief was provided for Bavaria, the ambassador's efforts to alleviate exploitation may have helped convince its government to remain a loyal French ally. This was only one aspect of their

most pressing task as ambassadors - to find and befriend collaborators, without whom the empire could not function.

Louis Guillaume Otto's career provides a good example of how this was done. To accomplish this, he had to occasionally act independently of his ministry, and indeed, of the emperor himself. His decision to violate orders and simply do what was necessary to accomplish the goals set in Paris allowed him to be a success. It was this independence that made it possible, despite many difficulties, to accomplish the crucial task of bringing the Electorate of Bavaria willingly into the imperial orbit in 1805.

Part Two: The Bavarian Embassy, 1803-10

Chapter Three: Louis Guillaume Otto and the Franco-Bavarian Alliance

Most states were brought into the Napoleonic Empire by force. Important exceptions can be found in Germany, where between 1805 and 1806 several states, under pressure to side either with France or Austria, chose France. That Bavaria became France's ally in 1805 was in large part due to the work of its ambassador, Louis Guillaume Otto. This chapter demonstrates how he used persuasion and threats to convince the Bavarian government and its timid ruler, Maximilian Joseph IV,¹ to accept the alliance. This diplomatic victory was won because Otto was both determined and flexible, even disobeying a direct order from his superiors at a key moment in August 1805. Without his independent actions, Bavaria could easily have joined France's enemies. Instead, Bavaria was transformed into a French satellite, with a duty to supply men and money for Napoleon's wars.

The Electorate of Bavaria was one of the most important German states to ally itself in this way.² The Napoleonic era was for the Bavarians a high-wire act that might have ended with the destruction of their state. Instead, by using the protection of the French Empire, the Elector's government was able to expand its territory, and at the same time launch a series of major reforms that allowed it to emerge from the period the largest and strongest state in southern Germany outside of Austria.

For the French Empire, Bavaria served as a key ally and buffer against Hapsburg Austria. It provided France with between 20,000 and 30,000 soldiers in campaigns from 1805 to 1813. Bavaria's defection to the Allies, only days before Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig in October 1813, proved to be the definitive act that ended Napoleon's domination of Germany.

¹ I will refer to him as "Max Joseph" throughout the rest of this dissertation.

² In 1799, seven Electors existed within the Holy Roman Empire, including the Bavarian. Electors chose the emperor, although by 1799 this had become a formality, with the position invariably going to a Hapsburg.

Bavaria represents a case study of a French ambassador in a satellite that willingly joined the empire, and was thus able to retain a certain degree of autonomy, even if only within the sphere of domestic policy. That Bavaria should become such an important part of France's European empire is not entirely surprising, considering the history of Franco-Bavarian foreign relations during the previous century.

France and Bavaria: a History of Foreign Relations

The history of France's relations with Bavaria dates back to the sixteenth century, when an alliance was created between the Elector and King Henry IV. Over time, the French came to see the nation as a useful partner against the Hapsburgs. As Louis XIV noted in 1704: "It is in the interest of France to aggrandize the Elector of Bavaria and to [use him against] the House of Austria."³ The Bavarians in turn saw France as a powerful friend that could protect them from Austria, which sought on multiple occasions to partition or annex their state.

Through the eighteenth century, the Austrian Hapsburgs regarded their neighbor as a natural addition to their empire, and on several occasions had even considered trading the Austrian Netherlands for it.⁴ The Revolutionary Wars that began in 1792 increased Bavaria's

³ "Instruction de Louis XIV au Ministre de France à Bavière, 1704," cited in Dunan, 4. John Gagliardo goes further, arguing that between 1670 and 1745 the Bavarians became "virtual clients" of France. John G. Gagliardo. *Reich and Nation: The Holy Roman Empire as Idea and Reality, 1763-1806* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 10.

⁴ The Austrians had made several attempts during the Revolutionary Wars to trade the southern Netherlands for Bavaria. The Directory itself had made such a proposal in 1795, only to be rejected by the Austrians, who feared Prussia would go to war to prevent the acquisition. The Austrians doubtless remembered how when Joseph II had attempted in 1778 to annex parts of Bavaria, the Prussian reaction resulted in the War of Bavarian Succession. See Paul B. Bernard. *Joseph II and Bavaria: Two Eighteenth Century Attempts at German*

importance as an invasion route for both sides. Elector Karl Theodore (who ruled from 1777 to 1799) attempted to remain neutral, but was forced to join Austria against the Republic in 1792.⁵ The Revolutionary Wars were particularly difficult for the Electorate. By 1795, it had lost the Lower Palatinate to the French. The following year both Austria and France invaded.⁶ Although the Treaty of Campo-Formio brought peace in 1797, Bavaria was again threatened by the secret provisions that proposed yet again to compensate Austria for the loss of the southern Netherlands with Bavarian territory. Fortunately for Munich, both sides were unable to agree on what part of Bavaria would be ceded. With the resumption of war later that year, the plan was dropped. (The official annexation of the left bank of the Rhine by the French Republic in 1797 led the French to promise German states compensation with some of the minor clerical and knightly lands in southern Germany.)⁷ At the same time, Austria continued to pursue its designs on Bavaria.

The Brumaire *coup* did little to change France's foreign policy vis-à-vis Bavaria. Napoleon decided it and other states of Germany were to be supported as a "Third Force" to balance Austria and Prussia.⁸ In order to accomplish this, they were to be strengthened through

Unification (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1965); and Michael Kaiser, "A Matter of Survival: Bavaria Becomes a Kingdom," in *The Bee and the Eagle*, 97.

⁵ As a member of the Holy Roman Empire, Bavaria was bound to provide a contingent if the Diet declared war against a common enemy. Lee Shartle Harford. *The Bavarian Army under Napoleon, 1805-1813*. (Ph.D. Dissertation: Florida State University, 1988), 20.

⁶ Even though the French occupation of Bavaria in 1796 was only of short duration, the country was forced to surrender ten million livres, 3,000 horses, 100,000 pairs of shoes, and 10,000 pairs of boots. Biro, *The German Policy of Revolutionary France*, Vol. II, 646-7.

⁷ Roger Dufraisse, "Bavière," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, Vol. I, 179. French promises of compensation to the German states for the loss of the Rhineland had first been made in the Treaty of Campo-Formio in 1797.

⁸ For a discussion of Napoleon's foreign policy goals in Germany, see Michel Kerautret, "Les allemagnes

the acquisition of additional territories.

The new Elector, Max Joseph (who had become ruler of Bavaria only eight months before Brumaire) would, like his predecessor, have once again preferred to remain neutral in the coming War of the Second Coalition. Instead, he was forced to merge his armies with Austria. They participated in the 1799 and 1800 campaigns, while the country itself became one of the main theatres of war. Between 1799 and 1801 it was again occupied both by French and Austrian armies, with unfortunate consequences for its economy and civilian population.

The French military occupation only ended with the Treaty of Lunéville (with Austria) in February 1801. Then, by a convention negotiated in August by Talleyrand and the Bavarian ambassador to Paris, Anton von Cetto, the French annexation of the left bank of the Rhine was recognized.⁹ In exchange, France promised to support Bavarian efforts to obtain compensation further east. The renewed closeness of the two countries was soon evident when a Franco-Prussian ultimatum forced Austria to hand over the city of Passau to Bavaria in late 1802.¹⁰ Napoleon then wanted the Elector to agree to an offensive-defensive alliance against any future anti-French coalitions. It was to do this that Otto was sent to Bavaria in May 1803.

The Life and Career of Louis-Guillaume Otto

Louis-Guillaume Otto had been born in the Duchy of Baden on August 7, 1754.¹¹ His

napoléoniennes,” in *Napoléon et l'Europe*, 324-39.

⁹ See Appendix I for a short biography of von Cetto.

¹⁰ Harford, 37.

¹¹ The biographical information for Otto is drawn from: “Otto (Louis-Guillaume), Comte de Mosloy,” in Henri-Robert, 280-3; Dunan, 61-2; “Otto, comte de Mosloy (Louis Guillaume),” in *Biographie universelle, ancienne et moderne*, edited by Louis G. Michaud. (Paris: L’Imprimerie D’Everat, 1811-62), Vol. 32, 245-8; and his

ancestors were bourgeois Protestants from Hesse-Darmstadt, where his father had served as a counselor to the Landgrave. Otto's connection to France began when he studied at the University of Strasbourg from 1770 to 1776.¹² (This also made him one of the few French diplomats to have received a university education.)

Following his graduation, Otto traveled to Munich, where in 1777 he caught the eye of the marquis de Luzerne, the French ambassador. The marquis was so impressed with the young Otto that he asked Elector Karl Theodore for permission to recruit him into France's Foreign Service.¹³ Between 1777 and 1779, he then served as Legation Secretary. When Luzerne was named in 1779 to be the first envoy to the United States, the marquis insisted Otto accompany him, thereby beginning the second phase of his diplomatic career.¹⁴

Otto was given the task of observing the United States Congress, which he did from 1779 to 1785. He then served until 1792 as Chargé d'affaires in Philadelphia. The comte de Vergennes, France's Foreign Minister, singled him out for special praise in his correspondence, and awarded him 1,500 francs. During this time, the young diplomat married a woman from a prominent New York family, Eliza Livingston.¹⁵ Then in 1792, like all French agents abroad, he

personnel dossier in the AAE: Volumes Reliés (Dossiers Individuels) Vol. 35.

¹² Whitcomb, 45.

¹³ The fact that the permission of the Elector was necessary for him to accept the post suggests Otto may have been working for the Bavarian government at the time. Otto's personnel file in the AAE is unclear as to what he had been doing in Bavaria prior to his making the acquaintance of the marquis.

¹⁴ Also in the marquis de Luzerne's delegation was a young Antoine René Charles Mathurin, the Comte de Laforest.

¹⁵ Elizabeth died in 1789. Otto married his second wife, a miss Sainte-Jean Crèvecoeur (daughter of Michel Guillaume Sainte-Jean de Crèvecoeur, best known as the author of *Letters from an American Farmer*) while he was living in the United States, on April 20, 1790 in New York City. "Otto (Louis Guillaume, Comte de

was recalled by the new republican government. He made the acquaintance of the Abbé Sieyès soon after his arrival in December. The Abbé was to be his patron in the Foreign Ministry for the next seven years. He was next appointed chief of one of the diplomatic sections, managing correspondence with Spain, Italy, Poland, and Switzerland.¹⁶ This provided him with invaluable administrative experience. However, when the Montagnards replaced the Brissotins in May 1793 as the dominant faction in the Convention, Otto was removed. Accused by a double agent working in London of conspiring with royalists, he was arrested in October 1794 and briefly held in the Luxembourg Prison. The real motive for Otto's arrest was probably his connection with Sieyès, an associate of the Girondins, a political faction with many enemies at the time.¹⁷ Although Otto was never in serious danger, he remained in prison until after the Robespierre's fall, being finally released in November.

Otto returned to the Foreign Service in 1797, serving as Secretary of the Berlin embassy under Sieyès until 1799. After the ambassador returned to Paris (where, as a member of the Directory, he helped organize the Brumaire *coup*), Otto ran the Berlin embassy until he too was recalled following a reshuffling of diplomatic postings ordered by the First Consul.

Otto's fluency in English, acquired during his time in the United States, helped him in his next assignment as Commissioner for Anglo-French Prisoner Exchanges.¹⁸ While in England he also participated in the preliminary negotiations of the Treaty of Amiens. For a brief time, he held the position of Minister Plenipotentiary to London, until being replaced in late 1802.

According to Marcel Dunan, Otto's conciliatory attitude towards England had angered

Mosloy),” in Henri-Robert, 281.

¹⁶ Jean-Denis Bredin. *Sieyès: la clé de la Révolution française*. (Paris: Editions de Fallois, 1988), 350.

¹⁷ Masson, 320.

¹⁸ The appointment of Otto as commissioner was made on December 29, 1800.

Napoleon.¹⁹ Another possibility, suggested in the *Biographie universelle*, is that he annoyed Talleyrand by refusing to assist his speculation in English public funds.²⁰ On his return to France, Otto was offered the post of Minister to the United States. His wife's poor health led him to reject a transatlantic voyage as too risky. In May 1803, he was offered another post, this time in Bavaria. He quickly accepted, thus bringing him back to where his diplomatic career had begun in 1777.

Otto was an excellent choice. As one of the few Germans serving in the Foreign Service, he spoke German with native fluency. His former experiences as secretary in the Munich embassy, which may have included personal contacts at the Bavarian court, had also prepared him well to serve as ambassador. His file in the archives of the Austrian Foreign Ministry characterized him as: "amiable... (but also) accustomed to employing all sorts of corrupt means, a great writer, very minute in details, [and] always ready to receive and convey all information that is told to him."²¹ Foreign Minister Jean-Baptiste Nompère de Champagny would later call him "one of [his majesty's] best servants."²²

Otto's instructions were simple. First, he was to make every effort to maintain peace in Germany, while promising support for Bavaria if the Austrians should demand any concessions or territory. Second, he was to exert his influence to further the reorganization the German states

¹⁹ Dunan, 61. Dunan's suggestion does not entirely fit the available evidence, as Otto continued to hold the post of Minister Plenipotentiary for several months in 1802 after Andreossy had arrived in London. If the First Consul had really been dissatisfied with him, Napoleon could easily have instructed Andreossy earlier.

²⁰ "Otto," in *Biographie universelle*, Vol. 32, 247.

²¹ Endnote 20, in Dunan, 455.

²² Champagny to Napoleon. December 16, 1808. AN. AF IV, 1706 B. Champagny served as Foreign Minister from 1807 to 1811, when the duc de Bassano replaced him.

then taking place, including the mediatisation of knightly and clerical lands, in Bavaria's favor. (Mediatization²³ had begun officially with the convocation under Russia and French auspices of the *Reichsdeputationshauptschluss* in February 1803.²⁴ By eliminating possessions of imperial knights and the Catholic Church in southern Germany, elements that had historically supported the Hapsburgs, it was hoped that Austria would be weakened. This would strengthen its rivals, Bavaria and Prussia.²⁵) Third, he was to work for the offensive-defensive alliance that was part of a greater effort to transform southern Germany into a pro-French bloc. Otto was ordered to convince the Bavarians that it was in their best interest to closely ally themselves with France. This was not easy to do, for while Bavaria had been the occasional ally of French since the seventeenth century, Napoleon's destruction of many small states had made him appear a danger to all traditional rulers. The Elector might have been suspicious of Austrian plots, but he was fearful of French intentions. To achieve his aims, Otto needed collaborators at the highest levels of government.

²³ Mediatization is defined as the process by which the territory of the minor principalities, free cities, and possessions of the imperial knights within the Holy Roman Empire was annexed by the larger states of Germany between 1797 and 1806 to compensate them for the loss of territory in the Rhineland to the French Republic prior to 1797.

²⁴ The Russian Tsar, Alexander I, was encouraged by Napoleon to consider himself one of the protectors of Germany. Before 1804, this led him to collaborate with Napoleon in furthering Germany's territorial reorganization. Sorel, VI, 231; Michael Adams. *Napoleon and Russia* (New York: Hambleton Continuum, 2006), 74.

²⁵ The Austrians did mediatize and secularize lands within their borders, though on a more limited scale than other German states. Contemporaries and historians have also pointed to the large size of the debt that the Bavarian state held in 1800 as being an important motivation for the Bavarian government's determination to pursue mediatization and secularization. See Rowe, "Napoleon and the 'Modernisation' of Germany," in *Napoleon and his Empire*, 204.

Otto's Bavarian Collaborators: Montgelas and Maximilian Joseph

Otto's main contact and collaborator was Maximilien Joseph Graf von Montgelas, the Elector's chief minister.²⁶ Born in Munich in 1759 to a Savoyard general serving in the Bavarian army, Montgelas had received a French education before enrolling to study history and public law at the University of Strasbourg. He finally completed his degree at the Bavarian University of Ingolstadt.²⁷ Montgelas had obtained his first appointment in 1779 with the Bavarian Department of Censorship. His career almost came to an end when Elector Karl Theodore dismissed him after discovering he was a member of the Illuminati. Fortunately, Montgelas was able to obtain a position with Karl Theodore's nephew Karl August. He subsequently became secretary to Karl August's brother, Max Joseph, who would eventually become Elector, and later king, of Bavaria. Although Montgelas once again fell under suspicion in 1793 for having "Jacobin sympathies," he returned to favor in 1796, after which he wrote a detailed proposal for reform that would later become the blueprint for changes during the Napoleonic era.²⁸ Montgelas was still reworking these plans when Max Joseph became Elector in February 1799.

Max Joseph immediately made Montgelas one of his closest advisors, appointing him first Foreign Minister, and then Finance Minister. Altogether, Montgelas served as the Elector's

²⁶ The biographical information on Montgelas is drawn from Dunan, 55-9; and Eberhard Weis, "Montgelas (Maximilien von)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 339.

²⁷ Savoy had been annexed in 1792. Montgelas' grandfather had been President of the Senate of Chambéry there. It is unknown if Montgelas and Otto met at the University of Strasbourg, though it seems likely (since both studied public law) that they at least knew of each other. It is also possible that they could have met while Otto was serving in the French embassy in Munich in 1779.

²⁸ Since Montgelas had expressed in his private papers disgust at the Jacobin terror, it is hardly likely that he had "Jacobin sympathies."

principal adviser continuously from 1799 to 1817.²⁹ A talented and hard-working man, he would only be forced to retire in 1817 by conservatives connected to crown prince Ludwig. Until then, he served as the Elector's *éminence grise*, pushing him to act decisively when he would have preferred delay. This made him the key man in the Bavarian government, and thus of prime interest to Otto.

Montgelas was a strong proponent from the beginning of a Franco-Bavarian alliance, believing Bavaria would benefit from France's support in expanding its borders. He also felt that an alliance would allow him to push forward reforms similar to those the Consulate was implementing in France. These included religious toleration, the abolition of manorial rights, compulsory primary education, and the promulgation of a constitution, as well as a more centralized bureaucracy and mass conscription.

Max Joseph's own association with France began when he had first accompanied his uncle to Paris during the reign of Louis XV.³⁰ Considered a *bon vivant* and a Frenchman by taste and education, he was made an officer in the French army at the age of fourteen (as many foreign princes were), rising eventually to the rank of Lieutenant General.³¹ Karl Theodore considered removing his nephew from the line of succession for being too pro-French, but failed to do so, thus allowing him to inherit the Electorate when his uncle died.

²⁹ The details of the reforms will be covered in Chapter Five.

³⁰ This biographical sketch is drawn primarily from Dunan, 49-52, and Weis, "Montgelas (Maximilien von)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 339. When Bavaria became a kingdom, in early 1806, he assumed the title of King Maximilien I Joseph.

³¹ Max Joseph also served as Colonel of the Royal Alsace Regiment in the Royal French army (a largely ceremonial position, though he may have provided funds for the regiment). Kaiser, "A Matter of Survival," in *The Bee and the Eagle*, 101.

Max Joseph was described by members of the court and foreign diplomats as hesitant, indolent, indecisive and cowardly.³² He also had a flexible mind and a tendency to seek compromise when confronted. Members of the diplomatic corps (including Otto) noted that it was difficult to get him to come to a firm decision, and then stick to it. Historian Marcel Dunan suggests that he had no policies, which accounted for his tendency to bend with every wind.³³

This formlessness was balanced by the new Elector's absolute faith in Montgelas, who was nothing if not decisive. The minister, who had always expressed great admiration for France, and harbored a strong dislike of Austria, was from the first a strong proponent of a French alliance. Still, it would take almost two years, and an Austrian invasion, to finally convince the Elector to even consider such a step. It was clear that Otto would have a lot of work to do before Bavaria was brought into France's orbit.

Drake, Mediatization and the First Steps towards Alliance

Britain, Austria, and France all ardently courted the states of southern Germany between 1801 and 1805. Most of these eventually allied with France just prior to the War of the Third Coalition.³⁴ The twists and turns of the Franco-Bavarian alliance negotiations provide an interesting insight into this process.³⁵

³² Dunan, 50-1.

³³ Dunan, 50.

³⁴ That is, France's war against the alliance of Britain, Russia, and Austria that had secretly formed in 1804 to fight Napoleon.

³⁵ For the diplomatic, military and political events leading up to the Franco-Bavarian alliance, see Frederick W. Kagan. *The End of the Old Order: Napoleon and Europe, 1801-1805*, Vol. 1 of *Napoleon and Europe*. (New York: Da Capo Press, 2006); Brendan Simms. *The Struggle For Mastery in Germany, 1779-1850* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 54-104; Frederick C. Schneid. *Napoleon's Conquest of Europe: the War of the Third*

When Otto arrived in Munich in the fall of 1803, Franco-Bavarian relations were still in flux. France and Britain were at war again after the Peace of Amiens, and both were seeking new allies. Otto cleverly eliminated Sir Francis Drake, the British ambassador, from this competition by exposing his participation in several émigré plots against Napoleon.³⁶ As a result, the Bavarians were forced to declare him *persona non grata*.

With British influence drastically reduced, Otto turned to the remaining obstacle, Austria. Otto's efforts in this regard were assisted by the increasing objections of the Austrians to mediatization, a process that promised great rewards for the Elector. To understand mediatization, it is necessary to consider the Holy Roman Empire's earlier history.

Since 962, when King Otto I of Germany and Italy had been declared Holy Roman Emperor, the Empire had included thousands of small territories (usually held by imperial knights), duchies, free cities, and ecclesiastical territories. These divisions persisted until Napoleonic times, when the Treaty of Lunéville authorized states that had lost territory to the

Coalition (London and Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2005); Paul W. Schroeder. *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 231-86; Harold C. Deutsch. *The Genesis of Napoleonic Imperialism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938); Sorel, Vol. VI; Jacques-Olivier Boudon. *La France et l'Europe de Napoléon* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006), 151-76; Roger Dufraisse, "Bavière," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 179-83; Jacques Garnier, "Campagne de 1805 en Allemagne," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 357-60; Paul Claude Alombert et Jean Colin. *La campagne de 1805 en Allemagne*, 6 Vols. (Paris: Librairie militaire R. Chapelot et cie., 1902-8); and Esdaile, *Napoleon's Wars*, 110-236.

³⁶ There is relatively little information on Drake's background, though he was apparently a descendant of that Sir Francis Drake who commanded the Royal Navy against the Spanish Armada in 1588. Drake had a long history of working with French émigrés and secret agents beginning with his appointment as Britain's ambassador to Genoa in 1794 (where he worked with Captain Horatio Nelson to interdict the transportation of supplies by the French for the Army of Italy). Elizabeth Sparrow. *Secret Service: British Agents in France, 1792-1815* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell & Brewer, 1999), 42, 48, 57.

French be compensated by incorporating many of these small territories.³⁷

Austrian efforts to defend the knights helped push the Bavarian government towards France. Otto, as directed by Talleyrand, strongly supported mediatization, although he advised the Bavarians not to be too quick in seizing new lands so as not to anger their new subjects.³⁸ When the Bavarians persisted with their plans, the Austrians moved their army to the border.³⁹ (As war became more likely, Talleyrand then ordered Otto to collect intelligence on Austrian troop movements.⁴⁰) In January 1804, the Aulic Council, which had a role in the governance of the Holy Roman Empire, issued a *Konservatorium*, largely aimed at Bavaria, decreeing that the knights should be restored to their former position.⁴¹ War was averted only after France and Prussia promised Bavaria military support. Thereafter the Bavarians paid lip service to the *Konservatorium* while continuing to mediatize lands.⁴²

Mediatization ultimately proved a great benefit. Having lost approximately 12,000 square

³⁷ Dufraisse, "Saint empire romain germanique," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 693-6; Gagliardo, 3-15, 206-41. There was one precedent for mediatization from the period before the Revolutionary Wars. When in 1791 Prussia annexed the territories of Anspach and Bayreuth, its government chose to impose its full sovereign rights over the imperial knights within that province, requiring them to provide military service to the Prussian state by the knights, while at the same time repudiating any military or financial obligations to the Hapsburgs. Gagliardo, 228.

³⁸ Otto to Talleyrand. 4 Brumaire An XII (October 27, 1803). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 179, fol. 312-5.

³⁹ Otto to Talleyrand. 8 Frimaire An XII (November 30, 1803). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 179, fol. 332-6.

⁴⁰ Otto to Talleyrand. 16 Frimaire An XII (December 8, 1803). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 179, fol. 349-5; Talleyrand to Otto. 18 Frimaire An XII (December 10, 1803). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 179, fol. 365-6.

⁴¹ Gagliardo, 26-31, 230-1. The Aulic Council was one of two imperial courts, along with the Imperial Cameral Tribunal. Two-thirds of its members were Austrian, thus allowing the Hapsburgs to dominate it.

⁴² Gagliardo, 231. French threats convinced the Austrians not to hold Bavaria too closely to the *Konservatorium*. If it had been enforced, the Bavarians would have had to restore the property they had seized, or else provide monetary compensation.

kilometers, 73,000 inhabitants, and four million florins in revenues from the territory annexed by the French, Bavaria gained 17,000 square kilometers, 840,000 inhabitants, and 6.5 million florins.⁴³ It incorporated eighty-three separate territories, including thirteen cities and fifteen monasteries. It also traded territories from which it was separated for those that were adjacent, and thus more defensible. This also promoted administrative uniformity and centralization within the Electorate. Furthermore, it served to free many peasants from rapacious ecclesiastical and secular landlords while at the same time improving the government's tax base.⁴⁴ For Otto, mediatization thus proved a means of pulling Austria and Bavaria apart, while creating an additional incentive for the Elector to ally with France.

Forging the Franco-Bavarian Alliance

1804 passed with relatively little change in Bavaria's foreign relations. Even the abduction and execution of the duc d'Enghien sparked little reaction in the Bavarian court, while the proclamation of the French Empire led the Elector to quickly recognize Napoleon's new title. Still, Max Joseph remained unwilling to make a definitive choice between Austria and France. Events would soon force him to do so.⁴⁵ Already, Austria had entered into a secret convention

⁴³ Dufraisse, "Bavière," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, Vol. I, 179. The Bavarians based their currency on the Austrian florin (referred to sometimes as the gulden). In 1805, one Austrian florin was worth 2 francs, 63 centimes.

⁴⁴ The increased revenues available to the Bavarian state led to greater financial independence from the nobility as well as from the clergy. On the debit side, the state also had to deal with the debts inherited from the new territories. Mediatization and secularization also had an important effect on peasant land ownership; before only four percent of peasants, and six percent of farmers, owned their own land. Afterwards, about half did. Hans A. Schmitt, "Germany without Prussia: A Closer Look at the Confederation of the Rhine," *German Studies Review* Vol. 6, No. 1 (February 1983): 23; Dunan, 119.

⁴⁵ Otto to Talleyrand. 22 Prairial An XII (June 11, 1804). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 180, fol. 181-3.

with Russia in November, whereby the latter agreed to secure a British subsidy for the Austrians. In return, both agreed they would combine with Britain and, if possible, Prussia, to end France's domination of Europe.

Still unwilling to choose sides, Max Joseph found an increasing number of excuses for rejecting Otto's request to open negotiations. One of the more unusual was the ongoing negotiations of a marriage between the princess of Bavaria and the crown prince of Baden. This led to one of the more amusing episodes of Otto's embassy, in which he and Talleyrand conspired with various members of the Bavarian court (including Montgelas) to end the engagement by employing plots worthy of a soap opera.⁴⁶ Fortunately for the French, the princess was indifferent to the marriage, while the prince ran off with a lady of the court. He avoided his father's volcanic temper by finding asylum in Paris. By February 1805, Otto was able to report that the way was again open for treaty negotiation.⁴⁷

With Russia now openly working to form a coalition with Austria and Prussia, Otto's post in Munich began to take on an increasing importance, and the treaty negotiations an added urgency. Otto was instructed to establish a network of agents along the Austro-Bavarian border to watch Austrian troop movements. This information was passed on to the Ministry of War.⁴⁸ Otto himself hoped for a war that would allow France to re-order Europe to its advantage: "After

⁴⁶ Otto to Talleyrand. 23 Frimaire An XIII (December 14, 1804). AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 11, fol. 112-6; Harford, 43-4. The Electress had sought to strengthen Bavarian ties with her relatives in Baden. Since the anti-French faction of the court organized around her, weakening her also weakened France's enemies.

⁴⁷ Otto to Talleyrand. 26 Pluviose An XIII (February 15, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 11, fol. 158-60. Otto at the same time offered Napoleon's stepson, Eugène de Beauharnais, as a potential suitor. Eugène and the Princess would finally marry in January 1806.

⁴⁸ Stephane Beraud. *La révolution militaire napoléonienne*, Vol. 1: *Les manoeuvres*. (Paris: Bernard Giobangeli Editeur, 2007), 102-5.

the peace all will be easy[,] all will be possible[,] all will yield to the genius who governs France.”⁴⁹

Although Max Joseph remained undecided, Montgelas was not. He told the French minister early in 1805 that Bavaria would side with France in the coming conflict.⁵⁰ Otto reported that Montgelas had told the Elector “France is your only support, since it alone is interested, not only in conserving your state, but in enlarging it.”⁵¹ Still, Max Joseph would not move.

The importance of the negotiations increased when Austria began to court Bavaria as well.⁵² At the same time, Otto began to notice increasingly menacing Austrian troop movements.⁵³ He soon began to speak of the coming conflict as one of “democracy against feudalism,” echoing revolutionary rhetoric congenial to Montgelas.⁵⁴ The first minister in turn made it clear that he would like to sign the treaty immediately. Otto, taking into account the concerns of the Elector, suggested France might settle for a purely defensive treaty that would only come into effect if Austria attacked Bavaria.⁵⁵

By April 1805, the skies darkened further for Munich, as Francis II, in his authority as Holy Roman Emperor, began to advocate more energetically for the imperial knights.⁵⁶ The Austrians (with the support of Russia) went as far as to suggest that they arm themselves, a step

⁴⁹ Otto to Talleyrand. 20 Nivose An XIII (January 10, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 11.

⁵⁰ Otto to Talleyrand. 2 Pluviose An XIII (January 22, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 22-4.

⁵¹ Otto to Talleyrand. 6 Pluviose An XIII. (January 26, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 29.

⁵² Otto to Talleyrand. 9 Ventose An XIII. (February 28, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 68-70.

⁵³ Otto to Talleyrand. 7 Nivose An XIII. (December 28, 1804) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 3-5.

⁵⁴ Otto to Talleyrand. 26 Pluviose An XIII. (February 15, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 59.

⁵⁵ Otto to Talleyrand. 4 Germinal An XIII. (March 25, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 93-6.

⁵⁶ Otto to Talleyrand. 22 Germinal An XIII. (April 12, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 105-8.

that seemed designed to create an internal threat in the event of an Austrian invasion.⁵⁷ In addition, it began to appear that the plight of the knights would serve as a *causus belli* for the Austrians once they decided to attack Bavaria.

Otto finally presented the text of a treaty to Montgelas on April 18.⁵⁸ Following Talleyrand's instructions, Otto had insisted on an offensive-defensive alliance. Montgelas proved willing to negotiate, while attempting to convince his master that Bavaria would have to act decisively if it was to survive.⁵⁹ As the Elector continued to prevaricate, Otto approached Montgelas with a suggestion for a more limited treaty, in direct defiance of Talleyrand's instructions.⁶⁰ Otto defended the change in a letter to Paris, pointing out that it only represented a first step towards the desired offensive alliance.⁶¹ Talleyrand instructed Otto to continue to negotiate. He was also to demand an additional concession—recognition of the new Kingdom of Italy.⁶² Napoleon in return promised to guarantee Bavaria's territory in the event of war. Finally, Otto was to remind the Elector that great powers always preyed on the weak. When war came Bavaria might have only twenty-four hours to make a decision. Behind these statements

⁵⁷ Otto to Talleyrand. 26 Germinal An XIII. (April 16, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 110-2.

⁵⁸ Talleyrand [Turin] to Otto. 28 Germinal An XIII. (April 18, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 112-3.

The original treaty project can be seen in AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 114-7.

⁵⁹ Otto to Talleyrand. 1 Floréal An XIII. (April 21, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 119-21.

⁶⁰ Otto to Talleyrand. 12 Floréal An XIII. (May 2, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 136-8.

⁶¹ Otto to Talleyrand. 17 Floréal An XIII. (May 7, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 141-5.

⁶² Talleyrand [Milan] to Otto. 7 Prairial An XIII. (May 27, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 152-6.

The Italian Republic had been transformed into the Kingdom of Italy by decree in March 1805, with Napoleon crowning himself in Milan in May. The Bavarians were expected to recognize the kingdom and guarantee its borders. Since the main Austrian army was poised to invade Italy if war resumed, such a provision ensured that Bavaria would immediately be brought into the war.

lay an implicit threat that Bavaria would suffer if Max Joseph allied with Austria, or even remained neutral.

Max Joseph's fear of an Austrian reaction remained the greatest barrier to completing the proposed treaty. It was only when Otto threatened to break off negotiations entirely that the Elector acquiesced to the defensive alliance, including recognition of the Italian kingdom.⁶³ Otto expressed his pleasure to Talleyrand, writing: "I hope [the Emperor] will see with satisfaction that we have taken a decisive step in moving the Elector from his imaginary neutrality to combining his interests with that of the empire."⁶⁴

By August, Austrian troop movements indicated war was imminent.⁶⁵ Ever more nervous, Max Joseph now insisted that Napoleon guarantee his lands in Swabia. The Elector feared that Napoleon's plans for a cross-Channel invasion would leave Bavaria largely defenseless.⁶⁶ By August 3, he was telling Otto it might be necessary to temporarily abandon most of his territory while awaiting Napoleon's arrival on the Rhine.⁶⁷ On a more positive note, Otto reported Bavarian public opinion had generally shifted in favor of France.⁶⁸

The next few weeks were decisive for Bavaria's future. Max Joseph feared an Austrian

⁶³ Otto to Talleyrand. 10 Messidor An XIII. (June 29, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 186-91.

⁶⁴ Otto to Talleyrand. 12 Messidor An XIII. (July 1, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 192.

⁶⁵ Otto to Talleyrand. 14 Thermidor An XIII. (August 2, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 236-8.

⁶⁶ In early August, Napoleon was still preparing to invade England. No one could imagine that it would take only thirty days for *La Grande Armée* to march from Boulogne to the Rhine. The French forces closest to Bavaria were Marshal Bernadotte's Corps in Hanover, about 400 miles to the north. See the map "War Preparations: 25 September 1805," in Robert Goetz. *1805, Austerlitz: Napoleon and the Destruction of the Third Coalition* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2005), 30-1.

⁶⁷ Otto to Talleyrand. 15 Thermidor An XIII. (August 3, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 238-40.

⁶⁸ Otto to Talleyrand. 16 Thermidor An XIII. (August 4, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 244-5.

invasion if the alliance became public. A request was therefore made for an experienced French officer to be sent to Munich as military liaison to the Elector. Furthermore, Montgelas asked that an additional clause be added to the treaty, which would oblige France to pay and provide provisions for the Bavarian army should it be forced to abandon its homeland.⁶⁹ Napoleon agreed to everything.⁷⁰ He also promised that France would pay cash for his own army's expenses as it marched through Bavaria, thus indicating that for once it would not engage in its customary looting. In fact, the French would later violate these promises, requisitioning food and other supplies in return for worthless IOUs. In order to mitigate these ravages, an effort was made to establish supply depots along the routes of the *Grande Armée*.⁷¹ As it happened, the rapid French march eastwards did not place too onerous a burden on the country, since they were on Bavarian territory for only a month.

Negotiations continued through the summer for a complete offensive-defensive alliance.⁷² Sensing indecision, Austrian agents began to spread rumors that Napoleon had already secretly agreed to the Austrian annexation of Bavaria; Otto himself was convinced that the nobility would welcome the Austrians.⁷³ Meanwhile, Talleyrand was frantic for Otto to conclude the alliance.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Otto to Talleyrand. 21 Thermidor An XIII. (August 9, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 263-7. In that case, the French were also to provide a subsidy to the Bavarian treasury.

⁷⁰ Napoleon [Boulogne] to Talleyrand. 28 Thermidor An XIII. (August 16, 1805) AAE. M+D France Vol. 1776, fol. 17-17 bis. This was the Treaty of Bogenhausen. The text can be found in Kerautret, *Documents diplomatiques du Consulat et de l'Empire*, 3 Vols. (Paris: Nouveau Monde Editions, 2002-4), Vol. II, 85-90. Though the Electorate was occupied by the Austrians for over a month, the French did not provide payments to the Bavarian army at any time during the 1805 campaign.

⁷¹ Schneid, *Napoleon's Conquest of Europe*, 106-9.

⁷² Otto to Talleyrand. 25 Thermidor An XIII. (August 13, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 272-4.

⁷³ Otto to Talleyrand. 28 Thermidor An XIII. (August 16, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 279-81;

The Elector finally agreed to the treaty on August 25, just as the main Bavarian army began to form at Burgau.⁷⁵ During all this time, the Austrians had debated whether to attack Bavaria immediately, or try and win the country over by diplomacy.⁷⁶ Count Schwarzenberg, the Austrian ambassador, had attempted to upset Otto's plans at the last minute by delivering an ultimatum to the Bavarian court, for while the treaty had been signed, ratifications had not yet been exchanged, meaning that the Elector could still renege.⁷⁷ Otto therefore suggested Max Joseph give a moderate reply to Schwarzenberg, and to begin talks to buy time until French reinforcements could arrive. Unbeknownst to Otto or Max Joseph, an Austrian army of 72,000 men under General Mack had already crossed the frontier. Just two days later, while Schwarzenberg was still insisting that the Bavarian army join Mack the Bavarian court and army was obliged to flee to Wurzburg.⁷⁸ According to Otto, it was only quick thinking that allowed them to escape.⁷⁹

Otto to Talleyrand. 5 Fructidor An XIII. (August 23, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 285-7.

⁷⁴ Talleyrand to Otto. 29 Thermidor An XIII. (August 17, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 283-4.

⁷⁵ Otto to Talleyrand. 7 Fructidor An XIII. (August 25, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 291-5. The text of the treaty is in AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 296-8.

⁷⁶ Otto to Talleyrand. 15 Fructidor An XIII. (September 2, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 317-8.

⁷⁷ Otto to Talleyrand. 20 Fructidor An XIII. (September 7, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 330-2.

Schwarzenberg would later lead the Austrian armies during the 1813 and 1814 campaigns.

⁷⁸ Otto to Talleyrand. 22 Fructidor An XIII. (September 9, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 332-3.

⁷⁹ Otto [Wurzburg] to Talleyrand. 25 Fructidor An XIII. (September 12, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 335-40. Otto appears in this report to have been caught up in the fears of the Bavarian court. The Austrian army only entered Munich on September 14, a week after the court had left. I am grateful to Robert Goetz for his assistance in plotting the movements of the Austrian, French, and Bavarian armies between September and October 1805.

Otto and the *Grande Armée*

Having gone with the Elector and his court to Wurzburg, Otto began to prepare for the arrival of the French by securing provisions, wagons and horses.⁸⁰ He also began to send intelligence on General Mack's positions to the emperor and the Chief of Staff, Marshal Berthier.⁸¹ Ambassadors of course had historically been important sources of military intelligence. However, this close coordination between the ministries of War and Foreign Affairs in 1805 was a Napoleonic innovation. Otto at the same time began to involve himself directly in the organization of the Bavarian army, recommending the Elector raise a National Guard modeled on the French.⁸² He believed the Bavarian people would support such a measure. Although it would take more than a year, Otto's advice was ultimately followed.⁸³ While

⁸⁰ Otto [Wurzburg] to Talleyrand, no. 173. 26 Fructidor An XIII (September 13, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 340-3; Napoleon [Augsburg] to Otto. 19 Vendémiaire an XIV (October 11, 1805), no. 10992, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 5, 794.

⁸¹ Otto would receive fourteen letters from Napoleon over the course of the 1805 campaign. On September 5, Marshal Berthier was told the ambassador would report to him about Austrian movements along the Inn. Napoleon [Saint-Cloud] to Berthier. 18 Fructidor An XIII (September 5, 1805), no. 10743, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 5, 666; Napoleon [Saint-Cloud] to Berthier. 20 Fructidor An XIII (September 7, 1805), no. 10756, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 5, 673. Prior to September, Otto's reports on the movements of the Austrians had been forwarded to the Ministry of War by Talleyrand. See Talleyrand to Berthier. 29 Thermidor An XIII (August 17, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 282-3; and AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 243. For biographic information on Berthier, see Général Fernand Gambiez, "Berthier (Louis-Alexandre)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 211-3.

⁸² Otto [Wurzburg] to Napoleon. 18 Vendémiaire An XIV (October 10, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 11, fol. 269-71. Otto's proposal can be found in AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 11, fol. 271-2. The French National Guard had been created in the early days of the French revolution, and acted as a reserve for the French army.

⁸³ Otto [Wurzburg] to Napoleon. 20 Vendémiaire An XIV (October 12, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 11, fol. 279-80.

Montgelas already had some plans for a Guard, Otto clearly provided the impetus for its creation. This marked the beginning of his intervention with the Bavarian War Ministry, which continued as he sought to transform the Bavarian army into a complete auxiliary of France. These interventions would increase in later years.

Otto was next instructed to work closely with the local authorities to prepare for the French advance through southern Germany. This included preparing 500,000 rations and 750,000 cartridges, for which Napoleon promised reimbursement to Max Joseph.⁸⁴ (The Bavarian army was also to immediately form at Ingolstadt and prepare to meet Marshal Bernadotte's Corps, rapidly approaching.) This was part of a larger French effort across Germany, as both Württemberg and Hesse-Baden were ordered to prepare similar caches. This allowed the *Grande Armée* to march from the Rhine to the Danube in eleven days, an accomplishment that led to the destruction of Mack's army. Otto had been instructed at the same time to deceive the Austrians by spreading rumors that Marshal Bernadotte was returning to France to defend the coast against English attacks.⁸⁵ This deception contributed to the Austrians debacle.

Despite a series of brilliant successes, Otto had continued to worry to the last. Fearful that the Austrian army, still entrenched near Ulm, might advance on Würzburg, causing the Elector to reverse himself and repudiate the treaty, he requested that the movements of the French forces be

⁸⁴ Schneid, 107. In most cases, the limited time available to the diplomats did not allow them to collect the amounts of food and ammunition that Napoleon demanded. Napoleon [Saint-Cloud] to Berthier. 28 Fructidor An XIII (September 15, 1805), no. 10799, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 5, 691.

⁸⁵ Talleyrand [Boulogne] to Otto, no 164. 15 Fructidor An XIII. (September 2, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 321-6.

accelerated.⁸⁶ It was only with their arrival near Wurzburg that the ambassador became more confident.⁸⁷ It was at last clear that all of his efforts had paid off, and he was delighted to report that the Bavarians had wholeheartedly embraced the French: “Nobility, citizens, farmers and even the clergy, everybody in Bavaria is for us now, all see us as liberators.”⁸⁸

Military events quickened during the months of October and November. Napoleon forced Mack to surrender at Ulm on October 20, opening the way for Max Joseph’s triumphant return to Munich. While the 1805 campaign was being decided further east, Otto then returned to requisitioning additional military supplies and equipment for the army. At the same time, Otto began his involvement with Bavarian state finances.

A major issue for any imperial project has always been the cost to the colonizer and colonized. It is therefore not surprising that money became a pressing issue during the alliance. As Europe had readied for war, Max Joseph’s fears had been augmented by the fact that Bavaria was almost bankrupt, being unable to secure necessary war loans. Otto had reported that the Elector had resorted to emergency measures, such as placing a twenty percent tax on fortunes exceeding 100,000 florins.⁸⁹ Otto and Talleyrand, seeing an opportunity to tie Bavaria even more

⁸⁶ Otto [Wurzburg] to Talleyrand. 5 Jour Complémentaire An XIII. (September 22, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 364-8. This fear was unfounded as there is no evidence that General Mack intended to move beyond Ulm at the time. Otto [Wurzburg] to Talleyrand, no. 181. 3 Jour Complémentaire An XIII. (September 20, 1805) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 356-8.

⁸⁷ Otto [Wurzburg] to Talleyrand. 3 Vendémiaire An XIV (September 25, 1805), no. 187. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 372-3.

⁸⁸ Otto [Wurzburg] to Talleyrand. 3 Jour Complémentaire An XIII (September 20, 1805, cited in Harford, 48.

⁸⁹ Otto [Wurzburg] to Talleyrand. 12 Vendémiaire An XIV (October 4, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 384-6.

closely to France, quickly offered their services to help finance their new ally.⁹⁰ The ambassador immediately wrote to Napoleon requesting French assistance in obtaining a ten million florin loan from the Dutch.⁹¹

With a French army still in Holland, Napoleon had great influence over the banks there. The French had long extracted forced loans ever since they first occupied the country in 1794.⁹² As the Napoleonic Empire became more integrated, it became increasingly common for Napoleon's ambassadors to negotiate loans between Dutch banks and the satellites. This allowed France's diplomats to smooth the functioning of the empire, while ensuring that France's allies were better able to meet their financial commitments.

The debt crisis also created a domestic revolution in state finance.⁹³ The distinction between the Elector's own debt and that of the government was done away with. The Elector was also no longer required under the new system to obtain the approval of the Estates of Bavaria to incur new debt.⁹⁴ As a result, the government was able to increase its debt by 425 percent between 1793 and 1818.⁹⁵ This was extremely important, for without these changes, Munich would not have been able to pay for its vastly expanded military, as well as the cost of

⁹⁰ Talleyrand [Boulogne] to Otto, no. 165. 15 Fructidor An XIII (September 2, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 327.

⁹¹ Otto [Wurzburg] to Napoleon. 20 Vendémiaire An XIV (October 12, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Volume 11, fol. 279-80.

⁹² The Dutch would later also be forced to extend loans to Spain.

⁹³ See the article by Hans-Peter Ullmann, "The Emergence of Modern Public Debts in Bavaria and Baden between 1780 and 1820," in *Wealth and Taxation in Central Europe*, edited by Peter-Christian Berg. (New York: Berg, 1987), 63-79.

⁹⁴ Ullmann, 69-70.

⁹⁵ Ullmann, 65-7. The Bavarian government raised thirty-one separate loans between 1794 and 1805.

integrating the new territories gained after 1802.

Changes in the state's major creditors were equally important. To overcome the Church's ownership of the debt, the Bavarian government began to issue bearer bonds in the Frankfurt capital market that reduced the portion held by the Church and its charitable organizations to only one-third (by 1819).⁹⁶ They were replaced by private, secular lenders and local communities. By 1819 these held forty-one percent of government securities and three-quarters of its bearer bonds.⁹⁷ This deprived the Catholic hierarchy of an important means of restraining reform. The lack of similar reforms in Bourbon Spain would lead, as will be demonstrated, to a very different outcome when it came to dealing with land reform and the finances of the Spanish state.

Despite these reforms, financial problems only became worse during the early months of the war. The famously wealthy Wilhelm IX, Landgrave and Elector of Hesse-Cassel, refused to agree to Max Joseph's request for a war loan of four million florins, so Max Joseph again turned to the French. (Wilhelm had an enormous fortune from the sale of mercenary soldiers, as well as from investments in British government bonds.⁹⁸ A loyal ally of Austria (and recipient of British subsidies), he was later punished when, during the 1806 campaign, Hesse-Cassel was first occupied, and later given to the new kingdom of Westphalia.⁹⁹) With the Dutch loan still not

⁹⁶ In the late eighteenth century, approximately two-thirds of state securities were held by the Church organizations associated with it.

⁹⁷ Ullmann, 77-9.

⁹⁸ Wilhelm's fortune had also been successfully managed by Amschel Rothschild, the founder of the famous banking family. Dunan, 174; Amos Elon. *Founder: A Portrait of the First Rothschild and his Time* (New York: Viking, 1996), 84, 105-6.

⁹⁹ Niall Ferguson. *The House of Rothschild* (New York: Viking, 1998), 66.

concluded, Talleyrand urgently turned to bankers in Strasbourg for relief.¹⁰⁰ They consented to lend, if only at five percent.¹⁰¹

Otto's overall role in the successes of the 1805 campaign brought him high praise from the emperor himself:

M. Otto, in wanting to prove our imperial satisfaction for the manner in which you have served us, we have named you [a] member of the Council of State. Have no doubt that we will continue to make [use] of your counsels. Your attachment to our person and to the *patrie* has been proven to us.¹⁰²

For Bavaria itself, newly freed from the Austrian threat, the full benefit of the French alliance was not realized until Napoleon's great victory at Austerlitz in December 1805. In the peace that followed, Bavaria received further compensation from Austria and Prussia, including the Bishoprics of Augsburg, Passau, and Eichstadt, part of the province of Franconia, the Austrian provinces of the Tyrol, Brixen, and Trent (in return for the Duchy of Wurzburg), and the entire enclave of Anspach (for which Prussia received the Electorate of Hanover).¹⁰³ The Bavarians in return were obliged to cede to France the Duchy of Berg to Napoleon's brother-in-

¹⁰⁰ Talleyrand [Strasbourg] to Otto, 23 Vendémiaire An XIV (October 15, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 394-5. Since Talleyrand had followed Napoleon and the army to Strasbourg in September, it was convenient for him to secure a loan for the Bavarians there.

¹⁰¹ Talleyrand [Strasbourg] to Otto. 23 Vendémiaire An XIV (October 15, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 290-1; Otto [Wurzburg] to Talleyrand, no. 25. 24 Vendémiaire An XIV. (October 16, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 181, fol. 398-9.

¹⁰² Napoleon [Schonbrunn] to Otto. 25 Brumaire, An XIV (November 16, 1805), no. 11115, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 5, 857. In February 1806, Napoleon also promoted Otto to the rank of Grand-Officer in the Legion of Honor. "Otto," in Henri-Robert, 281.

¹⁰³ For the text of the treaties see Kerautret, *Documents diplomatiques du Consulat et de l'Empire*, II, 112-7. In retrospect, the Bavarians would probably have been better off keeping Wurzburg and leaving the Tyrol in the hands of the Austrians.

law, Joachim Murat, the newly declared grand duke.¹⁰⁴

For Bavaria, now backed by the French Empire, the future looked bright. Its territory had doubled since 1803, and its population grown to in excess of three million. Economically, it could look forward to the exploitation of several new industries, from the salt mines of the Tyrol to the porcelain factories of Bruckberg. Bavarians could not have known that the full weight of the Napoleonic Empire's exploitative measures was about to fall.

Conclusions

At the end of 1805, Otto could look back on what was perhaps the most important accomplishment of his diplomatic career—the Franco-Bavarian alliance. None of this would have been possible without his close collaboration with Montgelas and Max Joseph. It was Otto and Montgelas who together convinced Max Joseph of the need for an alliance with France, without which Bavaria may have been swallowed up by Austria. By early 1806, Otto had fulfilled the instructions he had been given on arriving in Munich three years earlier—to gain an offensive alliance directed against France's enemies. He had overcome the plots of the British ambassador and the anti-French elements at court, and used last-minute brinkmanship to get Max Joseph's signature when the confrontation with Austria reached its climax in August 1805.

To gain his end, Otto had had to slowly and carefully maneuver Max Joseph to agree to the offensive alliance. Otto first presented a more limited version of the treaty, adding more controversial provisions over time. Equally important was Otto's willingness to disobey orders at that crucial moment in August, when he resisted Talleyrand's insistence that a full offensive-defensive alliance treaty be proposed at once. If he had not, Bavaria might have turned from

¹⁰⁴ Dufraisse, "Bavière," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 180.

France and the 1805 campaign been lost. All of this clearly demonstrates that Otto had a better understanding of Bavarian politics than his superiors in Paris. As for the future, Otto would continue to show that as their agent on the spot, he could make better decisions regarding imperial policies than they. As a result, 1805 would not be the last time he ignored or modified orders when he believed them misguided or wrong.

The role of Max Joseph during these negotiations is less impressive. The Elector vacillated until the Austrian ultimatum and invasion forced him to act. Still, in the end, Max Joseph did act decisively, if only under the added pressure applied by Montgelas. It was Otto's support of the reforms the first minister so desired that brought the latter so completely into the French camp. Otto's portrayal of the conflict as one of democracy against feudalism had yielded magnificent results. After the battle of Austerlitz, both Max Joseph and Montgelas could regard their alliance with France as a complete success. Bavaria saw immediate benefits, being transformed into the largest state in southern Germany outside of Austria. (Bavaria would be able to maintain this stronger military and diplomatic position, in particular vis-à-vis Austria, even after the fall of Napoleon.) Mediatization and annexations eliminated many enclaves and principalities that had resisted the imposition of centralized government and taxation. Through early 1806, it seemed as if Munich had achieved much at little cost. As for Otto, he would repeat his successful exploits such as the gathering of intelligence and the organization of army supplies during the 1809 campaign.

Unfortunately, the rosy outlook at the end of the 1805 campaign hid storm clouds over the horizon. Induction into the Napoleonic Empire began for Bavaria on the day of the Franco-Bavarian alliance, even if the Bavarians did not yet understand what that would eventually mean. Chateaubriand, a diplomat prior to 1804, had already observed that “[the Confederation of the

Rhine] will degenerate slowly from the spirit in which it was conceived. From a profound confederation, it will become only a fiscal and military machine [for the emperor]. The [tax collector] and the recruiter will take the place of the great visionary.”¹⁰⁵ In Munich, a prescient few might have equally realized that the need for emergency measures such as the Dutch loan for the financing of the 1805 campaign was a harbinger of worse things to come. They might also have understood that Otto’s influence over the finances of the Bavarian state, as well as its army, would only grow. Indeed, over the remaining four years of his embassy, the exploitative policies of the imperial system, combined with the cost of supporting the larger Bavarian army that Napoleon demanded, would drive the state almost to crisis. Otto’s role in implementing these exploitative measures, and their effect on Bavaria’s people and treasury will be examined in Chapter Four.

¹⁰⁵ François-René de Chateaubriand. *Memoires d’outre tombe*, 2 Volumes, (Paris, Gallimard, 1951), Volume, 752.

Chapter Four: The Bavarian State and the Burdens of Empire

The years between 1806 and 1809 were important ones for Otto as he presided over the increasingly unequal relationship between Bavaria and France. He was forced to deal with the economic and political crises that came with participation in the Napoleonic Wars. By 1809, the Bavarian government was almost bankrupt. How Otto facilitated and maintained this exploitation is the main focus of this chapter.

The larger territorial reorganization of Germany under French auspices was another area that most concerned Otto. The borders of an expanded Bavaria were demarcated in a series of agreements with its neighbors, culminating in the treaty that created the Confederation of the Rhine. The new borders of the lesser German states within this French-dominated structure were also in part determined by him. The ambassador in addition played a role in Napoleon's decision to strip Bavaria of a significant part of the Tyrol following the conclusion of his 1809 campaign.

Increased demands for soldiers and money usually followed the incorporation of a satellite into the Napoleonic Empire. It was invariably encouraged to expand and reorganize its army (through conscription and re-training in order to adopt French doctrine) without regard to the cost.¹ In addition, Bavaria was forced through the first half of 1806 to pay the expense of quartering the *Grande Armée*, close to 200,000 men. The financial burden was made even heavier by the debts inherited from the newly annexed territories. Although war with Prussia in 1806 removed Napoleon's forces and the attendant burdens from Bavarian territory, new expenses emerged when the government was forced to pay for the thousands of French, German, and Italian soldiers crossing its territory to join the advance into Poland.

¹ This meant tactics, organization and logistics. The French hoped this would allow satellite armies to fight more efficiently along side them, or, in modern military parlance, to achieve "interoperability."

Otto's efforts to secure advantageous terms for France in a series of commercial agreements was another form of exploitation. These, combined with the Continental System, clearly demonstrated to Bavarians the unequal economic relationship that had developed between the French and themselves under the empire. While French tariffs remained high on Bavarian goods, Otto continually sought to reduce Bavaria's tariffs on France's products. Moreover, when the Bavarians sought to reestablish their historic trade ties with Italy, Otto was quick to ensure that France would maintain a decisive commercial advantage over both satellites. These unequal agreements clearly lost Napoleon an opportunity to win over their satellites to the Continental System with a genuinely equitable continental market. Instead, the Bavarian government, like so many others, allowed English goods to be smuggled into the country in order to generate desperately needed revenues, and so contributed to the ultimate failure of the blockade.

The Kingdom of Bavaria and the Confederation of the Rhine

For many minor German states, 1806 was a fatal year, as a new, French-dominated Confederation of the Rhine replaced the Holy Roman Empire. For Max Joseph, the announcement of the elevation of his nation to the status of a kingdom (and himself a king), celebrated in Munich in the presence of Napoleon and the Empress Josephine, seemed to mark the dawn of a bright new age.²

The ceremony was modeled on Napoleon's own coronation at Notre Dame, with a royal procession, church bells and hundred gun salutes.³ Poems such as "An Ode to the First of

² Dufraisse, "Bavière," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 180.

³ Kaiser, "A Matter of Survival: Bavaria Becomes a Kingdom," in *The Bee and the Eagle*, 102.

January 1806” and songs celebrated the new kingdom, Napoleon, and the reigning Wittelsbach dynasty.⁴

The Franco-Bavarian alliance was further strengthened by the wedding of Eugène de Beauharnais and the princess Augusta-Amelia. Although Max Joseph was not entirely happy with the match, it served to tie his family more closely to the Bonapartes.⁵ (The couple would have a surprisingly happy marriage, and when Eugène’s loyalty to the emperor forced him to go into exile in 1814, he was allowed, despite some pressure from the great powers, to live in Bavaria for the remainder of his life with the title of duke of Leuchtenberg.⁶)

The changes that Napoleon had begun in Germany left many important details to be resolved by the parties involved. Otto was at the center of this. He was directly involved in the negotiations between Prussia and Bavaria for the formal cession of Anspach to the latter.⁷ He also mediated the new Bavarian boundaries with the states of Baden and Württemberg, as well as the transfer of other territories to Bavaria.⁸ This consumed most of Otto’s energy for months. It required all of his skills to prevent them from breaking down entirely. Württemberg, being the

⁴ A description of the ceremony can be found in Dunan, 1-2.

⁵ For a discussion of the reasons why Max Joseph at first opposed the marriage, see Kaiser, 102-4.

⁶ Eugène’s father-in-law made every effort to make his exile in Bavaria a pleasant one until his death in Munich at the age of forty-two in 1824. Alain Pillepich, “Eugène de Beauharnais,” in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 771.

⁷ Otto to Talleyrand, January 29, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 15-7.

⁸ Otto to Napoleon. January 27, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 12, fol. 78-9. See also Kerautret, “Napoléon, Frédéric et la naissance du Wurtemberg moderne,” in *Voies nouvelles pour l’histoire du premier empire: territoires, pouvoirs, identités: colloque d’Avignon, 9-10 mai 2000*, édité par Natalie Petiteau. (Paris: Bibliothèque de l’histoire, 2003), 75-95; and Napoleon [Karlsruhe] to Otto, January 21, 1806, no. 11316, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 6, 54-5.

last to accede to the new order in Germany, proved particularly intransigent, even massing soldiers on Bavaria's border.⁹ At the same time, Austria and Prussia continued to retain lands Napoleon wanted them to surrender. Prussia in particular refused to hand over Anspach, while the Austrians continued to recruit soldiers in Franconia, hoping to maintain connections with their former possessions in order to reclaim them someday.¹⁰ Otto was ordered to end this.¹¹ It took Marshal Bernadotte's occupation of Anspach to finally force Prussia to transfer ownership.¹² Prussian demands for compensation were summarily dismissed by Napoleon.¹³

Additional disputes then arose over the property and lands of both the Teutonic Order and the Knights of Malta (the latter having been dissolved by Napoleon in August 1806).¹⁴ Austria claimed all of these.¹⁵ At this point Otto had begun to grow concerned that the territorial disputes among the German states might lead to all-out war, and, comparing the situation to the Peasants'

⁹ Otto to Talleyrand. February 3, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 26-30.

¹⁰ Otto to Talleyrand. February 19, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 61-3; Otto to Talleyrand, no. 15. February 24, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 69-70. Recognizing his ambassador's influence throughout Germany, Napoleon was inclined to blame Otto for this transgression. Napoleon [Paris] to Berthier. March 18, 1806, no. 11717, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 6, 240.

¹¹ Talleyrand to Otto. [exact date unclear, but probably March 21], 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 123-4. For one example of a French request to recruit in Bavaria, see Talleyrand to Otto. September 9, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 202.

¹² Otto to Talleyrand. February 27, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 83-5.

¹³ Otto to Talleyrand. March 9, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 99-101; Talleyrand to Napoleon. June 25, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 247.

¹⁴ Napoleon [Rambouillet] to Berthier. August 22, 1806, no. 12774, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 6, 745. Napoleon allowed the Bavarians to seize all of the property of the Knights of Malta within their territory.

¹⁵ Otto to Talleyrand. March 16, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 111-4.

War of the sixteenth century that had devastated the land, repeatedly requested clarification of the emperor's intentions regarding Germany's reorganization.¹⁶ Fortunately, he was able to soon resolve most of the disputes himself, save for that between Württemberg and Baden.¹⁷ His final achievement in this regard was the resolution of even that seemingly intractable problem; this was formalized by the Treaty of Limits in June 1806.¹⁸ Yet despite all this, Otto felt less optimistic than one might expect following these diplomatic victories. He knew the smaller states remained fearful of what would happen when the *Grande Armée* withdrew from Germany, and had even received requests for the French to remain.¹⁹ As he explained to Talleyrand: "Germany has changed its face, but has not changed its character."²⁰ However, he also saw great opportunities for Napoleon in this, believing the French should step into the role the Hapsburgs had previously played in protecting the smaller rulers.²¹ This would create additional friends for France among those who had previously been Austria's most trustworthy allies.

Napoleon was quick to seize this advantage, naming himself Protector in the Treaty of the Confederation that marked the overall reorganization of Germany.²² In it, the states were

¹⁶ Otto to Talleyrand. March 15, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 108-10; Also see Otto to Talleyrand. April 20, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 164-6.

¹⁷ Otto to Talleyrand. March 20, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 117-20.

¹⁸ Otto to Talleyrand. May 23, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 204-8.

¹⁹ Otto to Talleyrand. June 24, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 245-6.

²⁰ Otto to Talleyrand. May 30, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 216.

²¹ Otto to Talleyrand. May 30, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 215-7.

²² "Text of the Treaty of the Confederation of the Rhine." July 12, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 252-7. The text of the treaty can also be found in Kerautret, *Les grands traités du Consulat et de l'Empire (1799-1815)*, II, 205-26. Articles 13-24 of the treaty cover the transfer of territories between the states of the Confederation. "Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine" was added to Napoleon's titles as Emperor of the

required to provide the emperor 63,000 soldiers (almost half by Bavaria alone). They would thereafter be an important source of manpower for the French army, fighting for Napoleon from Moscow to Madrid.

The consolidation of French domination was a source of increasing concern for Prussia. When he discovered that Napoleon had proposed to make peace with Britain by returning Hanover to George III, Frederick William declared war. Prussia then joined the British-led Fourth Coalition. Once again, the French armies enjoyed great success, smashing the Prussians the same day at Jena and Auerstadt. Napoleon then advanced into Poland, where his victory at Friedland in June 1807 brought Tsar Alexander to the negotiating table. In the resulting Treaty of Tilsit, Napoleon and the Tsar divided the continent, with Russia accepting French domination in western and central Europe.

Otto was at his proconsular best in arranging the newest transfer of territories that followed. Champagny, the new Foreign Minister, was delighted with the deference with which Austria and Prussia now received the ambassador's orders, and expressed great appreciation for his skills.²³

Otto's experiences were less happy dealing with Bavarian finances. The new kingdom's debt remained a growing problem. Yet here too Otto, while initially playing the role of dutiful enforcer of the imperial system, also began to assert his independence. Seeing the kingdom pushed nearly into bankruptcy, he would make a most unusual request for a subsidy to save it.

Bavaria's Burden: State Finances under the Napoleonic Empire

French and King of Italy.

²³ Champagny [Milan] to Otto. December 18, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 311-2.

Bavaria had suffered even before the Napoleonic era from financial problems. The Bavarian state under Max Joseph's predecessor had debts of between thirty and fifty million florins.²⁴ The annexations of 1802-6 had added new expenses of about 14 million florins, since the kingdom had to assume the territories' obligations to France.²⁵ Bavarian protests that these lands were already destitute because of the 1805 campaign were to no avail.²⁶ Berthier had been instructed not to transfer any territory until the last *sou* had been extracted.²⁷ As a result, the government was forced to announce that it would honor only one-half of the debts of its annexed territories; these would be paid in four percent long-term bonds.²⁸ Bavarian annexations had therefore only compounded a difficult financial situation. Yet another expense was created when Berthier demanded the Bavarian army mobilize early in 1806.²⁹

²⁴ Dunan, 126. Karl Theodore had been something of a spendthrift. According to a table in Gustav von Lerchenfeld's history of Max Joseph's reign, the debts owed from the accounts of "Old Bavaria" (the territories of the Electorate before mediatisation began) amounted in 1809 to 28,245,676.27 florins. Table in Gustav von Lerchenfeld. *Geschichte Bayerns unter König Maximilian Joseph I. Mit besonderer Beziehung auf die Entstehung der Verfassungs-Urkunde*. (Berlin: Veit, 1854), cited in endnote 68, in Dunan, 563.

²⁵ Dunan, 174-5, 182. The debts of the free city of Nuremberg alone amounted to twenty-six million florins. According to Lerchenfeld, debts from the annexed territories amounted to 38.2 million by 1809. There was also an additional nineteen million florins debt from various ecclesiastical territories.

²⁶ Montgelas to Otto. January 17-18, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 7-8; and Otto to Talleyrand. 20 January, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 9.

²⁷ Otto to Talleyrand. February 2, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 24-5. Berthier did not ultimately collect all of the contributions that had been levied. For example, although Swabia and the Bishopric of Eichstadt had been assessed with contributions of 480,000 and 960,000 francs respectively, the sums collected were just under 200,000 francs in Swabia, and a little over 215,000 francs in Eichstadt. Endnote 69, in Dunan, 564.

²⁸ Dunan, 182-3.

²⁹ Harford, 87-8. Napoleon may have intended mobilization to intimidate Russia and Britain into making

Straining under the cost, the government suggested a reduction in the size of its own army. Otto dismissed this, telling Talleyrand: "...Bavaria will always have to be forced to develop all the strength of which it is capable. I shall obtain their compliance in the name of the emperor."³⁰ The ambassador believed the country could support an army of 45,000-80,000, a figure it would only achieve with great difficulty by 1809.³¹

It was at this time that, due to the state of the kingdom's finances, Otto began to fear an internal uprising. He noted that:

Peasants can no longer furnish subsistence for our troops without being completely ruined. This leaves them unable to pay taxes. [An official of the Bavarian Ministry] of Foreign Affairs said to me that, if this state of affairs continues for one more month, the administration of the kingdom will [have to] stop, since the treasury cannot meet its most important obligations.³²

In addition, Otto felt that the Austrians were taking advantage of these problems through a widespread dissemination of anti-French pamphlets. He therefore encouraged the police to arrest both distributors and printers.³³ At the same time, Otto applauded Marshal Berthier's

concessions, as peace negotiations were underway between France and those two countries at the time. See Sorel, VII, 67-86.

³⁰ Otto to Talleyrand. April 2, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 146-8.

³¹ Otto to Napoleon. 7 Nivose An XIV (December 28, 1805). AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 12, fol. 57-8.

³² Otto to Talleyrand. May 10, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 188-9. To give a more specific example, the Karl von Lang, an administrator for the Bavarian state in Anspach, complained that it had cost him 3,000 florins to quarter several French officers for seven months. Karl Heinrich von Lang, *Memoiren des Karl Heinrich ritters von Lang*, 2 Vols. (Braunschweig: F. Vieweg und Sohn, 1842), Vol. II, 82, cited in Dunan, 176.

³³ Otto to Talleyrand. August 9, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 285-6.

exemplary punishment of several French soldiers who had committed crimes against civilians.³⁴ He suggested paying soldiers on a more regular basis might help curb excesses, an interesting case of a French ambassador telling the military what to do, and perhaps a sign of Otto's willingness to speak the truth to those in power.³⁵ In response, Napoleon ordered partial payment for the quartering of French troops (although the money was nowhere near the real cost).³⁶ Despite French assurances that the new kingdom would be compensated at some later date, this was never done. The Bavarian government soon came to regret the secret article of the treaty by which it promised "not [to make] any repetition of the demand for advances, for [goods] or services furnished to the troops of [its] allies during the war."³⁷

The ambassador now began several long and painful years in which he had to simultaneously coordinate exploitation, deal with all the hardships this produced (and the

³⁴ Otto to Talleyrand. July 23, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 268-71. Punishments for soldiers who stole from civilians or damaged property varied greatly according to their unit commander. While regulations prescribed strict punishments for looting, they were usually enforced only when the good order of the army was threatened. See Marie-Françoise Goenaga-Fournier, "Pillages," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 507-9; and John R. Elting. *Swords around a Throne* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1988), 429-35, 593-6.

³⁵ The pay of the *Grande Armée* prior to 1807 was irregular. Otto also reported local anger about French soldiers paying for their expenses with IOUs.

³⁶ Napoleon to Berthier. July 10, 1806, cited in Dunan, 177. The original Franco-Bavarian Alliance had provided for reimbursement for the subsistence of French soldiers. That provision however had been annulled by a clause in the Treaty of Brunn (in December 1805) which repudiated all payments associated with the 1805 campaign. Napoleon ultimately made one payment of a million francs to the Bavarian treasury (according to one Bavarian official later reduced to 600,000 francs) for quartering the *Grande Armée* in 1806. See endnote 72, in Dunan, 566-7.

³⁷ Kerautret, *Les grands traités du Consulat et de l'Empire (1799-1815)*, II, 115.

protests this engendered), and prevent the Bavarian treasury from going bankrupt. The Bavarians themselves were quite explicit about the extent of their problems, as a meeting between Otto and the Bavarian Finance Minister Hompesch shows. Otto was told that the costs of French troops in only a part of the kingdom (the so-called Duchy of Bavaria) in 1806 was twenty-two million francs. The final figure, multiplied for Bavaria's remaining territory, was eighty million francs, more than the kingdom's annual budget.³⁸ Moreover, Hompesch added, the military campaigns since the 1790s had seriously damaged Bavaria's commerce, industry and agriculture, further reducing government revenues.

Otto kept Talleyrand closely informed about the seriousness of the crisis, writing that the government had gone so far as ending tax exemptions for nobles.³⁹ Even this did not help, as the deficit reached crisis proportions by the middle of 1807. It was only when Munich reported it could no longer even pay the expenses of the Bavarian Corps in Poland, as well as the transit costs of thousands of French and allied soldiers crossing the kingdom each month, that Paris began to take notice.⁴⁰ This was followed by a Bavarian request that their troops in Poland be allowed to at least live off the land, in the French manner, in order to reduce expenses.⁴¹ Considering the limited resources in Poland that spring, this was clearly a desperate proposal. By this time, too, Bavarian bonds were being discounted in money markets by more than thirty percent. It was only at this point Napoleon finally decided to act. He promised to take care of

³⁸ Otto to Talleyrand. April 1, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 87-9; Dunan, 177.

³⁹ Otto to Talleyrand. June 18, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 162-5.

⁴⁰ Otto to Talleyrand. April 1, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 87-9.

⁴¹ The Bavarians reported a total of 36,658 troops serving in Poland and Silesia: "Tableau des troupes bavaoises, qui se trouvent sur le pied de guerre en Pologne et en Silesie." AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13, fol. 29.

the pay and provisions for all Bavarian troops attached to the *Grande Armée*.⁴² Sensing weakness, Max Joseph's government then asked if the same solution might not be applied to the provisioning and quartering of French and allied troops crossing Bavaria.⁴³

Enormous reciprocal debts between Bavaria and France therefore remained outstanding towards the end of 1807. The French Treasury Minister announced it was still owed for support provided for Bavarian soldiers in Poland.⁴⁴ Otto was insistent that this be paid.⁴⁵ But he also wanted French debts to Bavaria honored. Champagny therefore asked the Bavarians to send a Commissioner for negotiations.⁴⁶ Later in November 1807, the ambassador began to request that payments be regularized. He suggested a *payeur* be installed at Augsburg with sufficient funds to support soldiers traveling through the kingdom.⁴⁷ Otto was later gratified to learn that such an officer had been appointed.⁴⁸

What is most striking here is the French Treasury Minister's suggestion that Otto be the one to preside over debts involving the army as well as the treasury. This is yet another example

⁴² Talleyrand [Warsaw] to Otto. April 21, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13, fol. 21.

⁴³ Otto to Talleyrand. May 9, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 132-3.

⁴⁴ Mollien [Minister of the Public Treasury] to Champagny. August 22, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 211-2. Jean-Baptiste de Nompère-Champagny had replaced Talleyrand as Foreign Minister in August 1807.

For Mollien's biography, see Appendix I.

⁴⁵ Champagny to Otto. September 3, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 216-7.

⁴⁶ Champagny to Otto. September 3, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13, fol. 59-60.

⁴⁷ Otto to Champagny. November 15, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 290-2. The *payeur* was a treasury official attached to the army, though they sometimes also had a military rank. "Payeur," in *Dictionnaire de la Grande Armée* (Paris: Talandier, 2002), 453.

⁴⁸ Berthier to Champagny. January 23, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 14; and Otto to Champagny. November 15, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 290-2.

of the expanding role of French ambassadors, far outside the usual uses of diplomacy, in the execution of imperial policy.⁴⁹ Even so, Otto did not get everything he wanted. His proposal that future payments to Bavaria be made on a month-by-month basis was refused. Instead, the accumulated transit costs were to be absorbed by the Bavarians, and only later assessed against payments made to the Bavarian army.⁵⁰

This only led to fresh arguments with Munich over the exact sums owed. Following his usual custom, Napoleon then arbitrarily decided that the Bavarian government had already been compensated adequately with territories it had acquired at the conclusion of the 1809 campaign, and was owed no more.⁵¹

Otto realized that Munich, being faced with the threats of bankruptcy and peasant revolt, was in an untenable situation, only made worse by Napoleon's callousness. He realized he must act. Summoning all his courage, he suggested France pay Bavaria a regular subsidy. He was eloquent.

It should be remembered what influence earlier subsidies gave... to France and to England in the New World... I myself witnessed the advantage that France [acquired] from a loan... to the United States of America. This kind of help will not only be most effective in Bavaria now, but will also furnish a future reserve of good will. The U.S.A. had not found [it] easy to subsequently abandon France... It was only after the [last] payment that the Americans moved to break with us... You can judge better than I if an advance of 500,000 francs per month, paid to

⁴⁹ Mollien to Champagny. January 23, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 15-6.

⁵⁰ Napoleon assessed the Bavarian debt to France at two million Francs in March 1808.
Napoleon [Paris] to Champagny. March 10, 1808. AAE. M+D France 1780, fol. 64-64 bis.

⁵¹ Otto to Champagny. March 29, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13, fol. 272:
"Estimated advances of the Bavarian government: 3,325,183 francs, 77 centimes.
Estimated advances of the French government: 2,010,062 francs, 10 centimes.
Balance owed to Bavaria: 1,315,121 francs, 67 centimes."

[Bavaria] would not produce a very good effect.⁵²

This suggestion received an immediate rebuke from Napoleon: “Tell Sieur Otto I do not want to hear him speak of subsidies; this is contrary to our [policy]; it was good for the old government, because it had few soldiers; but today the power of France and the energy of its people produce as many soldiers as I want... France’s money is [better] employed to equip and prepare [our army].”⁵³

Otto quickly backed down. It was clear that making his allies and enemies bear the costs of war equally was a principle Napoleon was determined to pursue. He certainly did not want to establish any precedents that might lead to other satellites requesting similar payments.⁵⁴ All this bickering was definitively ended by a new alliance in 1810 that obliged Bavaria to pay fifteen million francs in the form of five percent bonds to the French treasury.⁵⁵

The question of reciprocal payments sheds much light on the exploitative side of Franco-Bavarian relations. Napoleon wanted a spoils system designed to benefit France. Objections from France’s allies about its cost were almost always ignored. Once Napoleon had spoken, Munich had little choice but to bear its burden. Montgelas had earlier suggested to Otto privately that in the next war against Austria, French troops pay for their requisitions in cash.⁵⁶

⁵² Otto to Champagny, no. 272. March 17, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 127-30.

⁵³ Napoleon to Champagny. April 1, 1809. M+D France Vol. 1782, fol. 86.

⁵⁴ France had periodically provided subsidies to the Bavarians during Louis XV’s reign. Jeremy Black. *European Warfare in a Global Context, 1660-1815* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 172.

⁵⁵ “Treaty with Bavaria for the execution of the Treaty of Vienna.” February 28, 1810. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 14, fol. 219. The full text of the treaty can be found in Kerautret, *Les grands traités du Consulat et de l’Empire (1799-1815)*, II, 487-91.

⁵⁶ Otto to Champagny. August 8, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 225-6.

Yet here too, foraging and forced requisitions had become such an integral part of French operations that nothing was changed.

Bavaria's financial difficulties became still worse by the opening of the 1809 campaign. Fortunately, its early (and successful) conclusion coincided with the introduction of new financial reforms that allowed the government to stave off total collapse.⁵⁷ Revenue from a more efficient system of taxation rose from twenty-one to twenty-six million florins. A new forced five percent loan was floated, and a proposal made to create a National Bank modeled on the Bank of France.⁵⁸

Bavaria's finances would be seriously threatened again only with Napoleon's invasion of Russia.⁵⁹ When the Bavarian Corps was wiped out, the kingdom was forced to raise another army. This contributed to Max Joseph's decision to finally defect to the Allies.

All together, the interaction of imperial policy with Bavaria's finances reveals the central importance of exploitation in the Napoleonic system. Even though the kingdom was clearly in crisis at least twice between 1806 and 1809, the French did little to help. The speed with which Otto's suggestion of a subsidy was rejected shows this inflexible policy came from the emperor himself, though it was shared by many imperial officials.

Otto's suggestion of a subsidy also shows that his views of what was good for the empire

⁵⁷ Efforts were made to create a general cadastre that would allow a complete economic and topographical map of the entire kingdom, in order to assess taxes more accurately. (It would only be completed in 1828.) Other changes included the introduction of a simplified system of taxation (reduced from 607 separate taxes to only four), and the creation of a national lottery. By 1810 this was producing 700,000 florins per year. See Dunan, 180-3.

⁵⁸ Otto to Champagny. July 24, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 402-3; Otto to Champagny. July 30, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 410-1.

⁵⁹ Unfortunately, Dunan's account ends in 1810.

sometimes differed significantly from his superiors. The ambassador realized that exploitation was undermining the Franco-Bavarian alliance and that a bankrupt kingdom would weaken France. He preferred a more subtle, moderate approach. The proposal of a subsidy therefore represented an effort to advance the larger goals of the imperial system - a successful end of the wars against the allies, and the permanent preeminence of France in Europe - by propping up the finances of the Bavarian state in order to strengthen Franco-Bavarian ties. He realized that unrelieved coercion and despoilment would only multiply France's enemies. This does not mean that Otto objected to exploitation. He only sought to alleviate its immediate effect, and by reducing it make it more sustainable in the long run.

Of course it was not just men and money that Bavaria was expected to supply. France also made efforts to transform the kingdom by means of the Continental System into an economic dependency. This was considered to be of great importance, since it was hoped German markets might replace those lost overseas.⁶⁰ The French also wanted to redirect Bavarian trade, which had historically moved North-South, to an East-West direction favorable to France. While high tariffs protected the French Empire from Bavarian exports, Otto sought to lower barriers to French imports, thus opening another market for French merchants. In order to better understand the effects of these policies, we must begin with a description of the Bavarian economy in the eighteenth century.

The Commercial Exploitation of Bavaria: From the Continental System to the Italo-Bavarian Commercial Treaty

⁶⁰ See the table for French exports. "Table III-A: French Exports to the *Rheinbund* and the Kingdoms of Spain and Italy, An XIV-1814," in Appendix III.

The eighteenth-century Bavarian economy was largely agricultural. It had slowly improved under Karl Theodore, as swamps and forests were converted to farmland.⁶¹ Travelers were almost unanimous about how little manufacturing there was. As Frederick Nicolai notes in *Description of a Voyage across Germany and Switzerland in 1781*:

The country has no industry, and the circulation [of goods] is so bad that there is often scarcity... Ignorance and superstition exist among all classes to an incredible degree... A third of the peasants do not know how to read or write, and thousands of farms have been abandoned.⁶²

This only began to change after 1805 with the acquisition of Ratisbon, Augsburg, and Nuremberg, all important commercial centers.⁶³ Still, Bavaria even before this enjoyed a favorable trade balance of two million florins (fifteen million florins in exports against thirteen million in imports). Its most important trading partners were Austria and the other German states, followed by Italy, and then France. Major exports had included cereals, livestock and hops (of which Bavaria was the largest German supplier). Even so, the export economy was relatively undeveloped, and would only begin to expand with the elimination of internal trade barriers in 1809.

This change did little to reduce a new and serious trade imbalance under Max Joseph. The combination of French protectionism and the Continental System did great damage to the local economy. The 1806 Berlin decree establishing a blockade of British trade brought Bavaria

⁶¹ Dunan, 125-6.

⁶² Frederick Nicolai. *Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland u. die Schweiz in Jahre 1781, nebst Bemerkungen über Gelehrsamkeit, Industrie, Religion u. Sitten*, 12 Vols. (1785), Vol. VI, 754. cited in Dunan, 126. Nicolai's observations are generally supported by other sources. Dunan. 119, 135.

⁶³ Dunan, 124.

into the latest phase of the long economic struggle that France and Britain had been waging since the seventeenth century.⁶⁴ The central assumption of the Continental System was that an interruption in England's trade would create a business crisis that would result in the collapse of its debt-ridden banking system.⁶⁵ Napoleon believed this might even bring England to the verge of revolution.⁶⁶ At the very least, he hoped it would make Britain's funding of anti-French coalitions more difficult, since excise taxes were a major source of government income.

The Continental System also drew on a long tradition of French protectionism that dated back to Colbert's ministry. The French had briefly abandoned protectionism with the 1786 Eden Treaty. Its negative effects had soured a generation of Frenchmen on free trade.⁶⁷ Napoleon had therefore invented nothing new with his System. He merely expanded old policies on a much

⁶⁴ The full text of the decree can be found in Kerautret, *Les grands traités du Consulat et de l'Empire (1799-1815)*, II, 259-62. Napoleon's immediate justification was the British declaration of a naval blockade. The Orders in Council by which neutral vessels were forced to trade through British ports or face seizure was rightly considered by Napoleon a violation of international maritime law. The System was also driven by the desire to strike at "that nation of shopkeepers" after Trafalgar had ended any hope of invading Britain. See Dufraisse, "Blocus Continental," *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 234-5; Woolf, 140-1.

⁶⁵ The French knew that Britain's debt had increased by 2,800 percent during the eighteenth century, and that the Bank of England had bullion equaling only forty percent of its loans. Dufraisse, "Blocus Continental," 231.

⁶⁶ This view had already been expressed by the Girondin politician de Kersaint in January 1793, when he said: "The credit of England rests on fictitious wealth." William M. Sloane, "The Continental System of Napoleon," *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 13, No. 12 (June 1898): 214.

⁶⁷ See Jeremy Black. *Natural and Necessary Enemies*, 69-70, 134-58; and Robert and Isabelle Tombs, 181, for Anglo-French views of the Eden treaty. The Treaty did benefit French wine growers in the south and those industries not in direct competition with English manufactures. However, France's northern textile industries were so seriously hurt that many came to believe the treaty was an English plot to ruin the French economy.

larger scale. Bavaria, like the rest of Germany, was soon to be a major battleground in this renewed commercial struggle.

Following the early conquests of the Revolution, customs posts had been established along the Rhine and on the territory of France's sister republics to ensure the enforcement of an earlier Republican boycott. Like Napoleon's System, this was not only intended to hurt England, but to also benefit France's manufacturing. French armies even went so far as to seize "enemy" factories, as in the case of General Moreau's confiscation of machines from the city of Constance that could benefit the Lyon silk industry. He ordered all others destroyed.

Napoleon had begun to expand these policies even before the Berlin decree. From the first, they were based on neither fair nor free trade. These regulations had established exorbitant tariffs on colonial goods, as well as on certain cottons and linens.⁶⁸ For Napoleon, the economic health of Europe was always of far lesser importance than his goal of bankrupting Britain, and the creation of a European market that French industry could exploit. As for the German states, "They must be the continental colonies of the empire," as Montgaillard, one of the architects of the System, said.⁶⁹ Otto too regarded Bavaria as an ideal place for profitable activities, since the country produced few products the French wanted, while its duties on French products could be greatly reduced.

The simultaneously mean and inefficient workings of the System can be seen in microcosm through the case of Hofer and Pichler, Bavarian merchants whose sixty-one tons of whale oil were seized in 1806 at the port of Hamburg. Montgelas first informed Otto of the

⁶⁸ Sugar from Haiti alone was so profitable that its sale prior to 1789 provided one-third of French revenues from excise taxes. Jean-Marcel Champion, "Saint-Domingue," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 689. The new tariffs were applied in the French Empire and the Kingdom of Italy. They were later extended to the Kingdom of Naples.

⁶⁹ Mongaillard, cited in Dunan, 333. It is telling that the German states were referred to as "colonies."

merchants' complaints on November 26, 1806. The ambassador assured him that the Continental System would properly respect Bavarian commerce, and that Hofer and Pichler would be reimbursed.

The claims should have been settled in a few weeks. In fact they dragged on for more than four years. First, the Bavarians were informed that the army had already sold the oil, and that the War Ministry had to determine the sum to be reimbursed. This request was then passed on to the Finance Ministry for its approval.⁷⁰ Bavarian ambassador von Cetto, who also attempted to intervene, was informed in October 1809 that *Ordonnateur* Lenoble, the only man who could verify the value of the oil, could not be reached, since he was with the army in Spain. It was not until March 1811 that a resolution was finally reached, when it was discovered that the proceeds of the sale had been stolen, making compensation impossible.⁷¹ The case was remarkable in that it received any attention at all from the French authorities. Many examples of this type can be found in the commercial negotiations Otto participated in between 1807 and 1809.

Otto was obliged as France's man on the spot to adjudicate the far more important trade disputes between other German states, being asked in one instance to deal with the high tariffs set by the Grand Duchy of Baden. Since Baden was the route by which most Franco-Bavarian trade moved, this threatened to have an adverse effect on France.⁷² Fearing that Baden's actions would be followed by others, leading to a general decrease in trade that would effect the German

⁷⁰ It took until late 1808 for the French bureaucracy, following the intervention of both Montgelas and von Cetto, to finally direct the Bavarians to the proper official. Dunan, 301-2.

⁷¹ See "Document II-A: Letter of Comte Jean-Jacques Defermon to Anton von Cetto [Bavarian Ambassador to Paris], Regarding the Goods of the Merchants Gofer and Pichler," in Appendix II.

⁷² Otto to Champagny. October 22, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 260-2.

states as well as France, Otto acted to reduce these.

This suggests that Otto's own thoughts about protection were less fixed than Napoleon's. A letter of 1806 revealed his true opinions. Talleyrand, having asked him whether Bavarian merchants should be required to present their passports on entering France only once, or at each major French city, Otto replied:

Even if this measure contributes to the good order of the empire, we will damage the commercial and industrial ties between our allies and France. One knows how much a delay of eight days, or a detour of 20-30 leagues, hampers merchants careful about their expenses. Our wines, our silks, and our cloth have very considerable markets at Ulm, Augsburg, Munich, Nuremberg, etc. A great number of traveling salesmen from Lyon, Paris, Beaune, and Rheims cross Southern Germany, and, based on the principle of reciprocity, the allied governments [could] demand at each frontier the formalities prescribed in France. This would soon become onerous for this useful class of French travelers...

As it is, for four or five years now Hungarian has been replaced by French wines. The silks of Lyon, porcelains, cottons, bronzes and furniture of Paris, [as well as] French merchandise of all kinds, have found favor in this country, and one can now say that nine-tenths of Bavarians want only France's [products]. This situation must not be allowed to change.⁷³

This letter (which might have come from Adam Smith), and written several months before the imposition of the Continental System, suggests that Otto believed that trade restrictions should be eased as much as possible. It was only duty that obliged him to enforce the emperor's mercantilistic and autarkic policies.

The shifting of trade routes was another major French undertaking. Bavaria had traditionally been part of a trade network that extended from Germany to Italy and the Levant. Italy had historically been an especially important market and *entrepôt* (through Venice) for Bavarian merchants. The Bavarian government had originally hoped that through the French alliance, Napoleon (as King of Italy) would negotiate trade agreements to Bavaria's advantage.⁷⁴

⁷³ Otto to Talleyrand. August 12, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 288-90.

⁷⁴ Dunan, 353-4. It is significant that when the Bavarians wanted to open negotiations with the Italians for

Since this was in conflict with French determination to gain preferential treatment for French goods in the peninsula, this was not to be. The emperor wanted more generally to replace European North-South trade routes from the Baltic to the Mediterranean with routes through France that would run along the great rivers of Europe. At the same time, he wanted France to retain its traditional role in the redistribution of colonial goods. (It was hoped the *metropole* would regain its old colonies after Britain's defeat, and that the sugar trade in particular would be restored.)⁷⁵ Napoleon's opposition to any Italo-Bavarian commercial agreement becomes easier to understand when it is realized that he believed that every franc lost by Italy or Bavaria would be one gained by France. In the end, he was unable to change trading patterns that had persisted for centuries, although it was not for want of trying.

As a result of this thinking, trade between Italy and Bavaria was not only restricted by the Continental System; some goods were entirely prohibited.⁷⁶ Even after the Bavarian government tried to address French fears about British contraband (always a concern when dealing with international trade) by promising to strengthen its anti-smuggling measures, Napoleon would not be moved.⁷⁷ It was in the face of these policies that Montgelas began negotiations for a new commercial treaty. He welcomed the Italian proposed of a reciprocal lowering of tariffs by twenty percent on, among other things, salted fish, glassware, fruit, refined sugar, clothing, silk,

a new commercial agreement in August 1806, it was their ambassador in France, von Cetto, who first proposed this.

⁷⁵ Dunan, 362-3. See Paul Fregosi. *Dreams of Empire: Napoleon and the First World War 1792-1815* (New York, Birch Lane Press, 1989) for a more detailed examination of Napoleon's colonial aspirations.

⁷⁶ Dunan, 351-2. A decree of June 10, 1806 placed Italian customs posts under French control, while prohibiting the entrance of any British goods into the Kingdom of Italy. A decree of December 1807 next prohibited the kingdom from importing any raw or manufactured cotton. This was clearly directed against England.

⁷⁷ Dunan, 353-4.

and soap, as well as an agreement to conduct trade on a most favored nation basis.⁷⁸ Napoleon was not happy with any of this. He especially wanted France to keep its superior commercial position in Italy, which he regarded as a key French market. The peninsula had been one of the few regions where French commerce had rebounded rapidly after the Revolutionary era. As an 1811 report by the French Council of Commerce and Manufactures made clear: “Exports to Italy have revived our industry and... Italy remains... our sole resource.”⁷⁹

To protect these fundamental interests, Napoleon delayed the signing of the treaty as long as possible, and then had a clause inserted exempting France from the most favored nation provision, so that Italian duties on French goods would always remain lower than those on Bavarian.⁸⁰ Just after the signing, a separate Franco-Italian accord cut Italian duties on French goods even more, giving the French an even more significant advantage.⁸¹ Italy had historically been Bavaria’s third most important trading partner behind Austria and Germany, and the route by which it maintained trade with the Mediterranean.⁸² This was now changed. It created significant hardships for Bavaria.

Unfortunately, the Italo-Bavarian commercial treaty, with its special French codicles, did not mark the end of Bavaria’s trade problems. In January 1809 another law, barring the importation of goods into Italy from the north that were “reputed” to be English, was promulgated. Merchants were thereafter required to have a certificate from a French customs

⁷⁸ Dunan, 357-8.

⁷⁹ Cited in Desmond Gregory. *Napoleon’s Italy* (Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001), 144.

⁸⁰ Dunan, 358, 360.

⁸¹ Dunan, 362-4. The Italo-Bavarian Accord was signed on July 18, 1808. The Franco-Italian Accord was signed two days later.

⁸² These routes had become particularly lucrative after the Bavarian annexation of the Tyrol in 1806.

official attesting to their origin.⁸³ This of course led to extensive fraud and bribery. English cotton coming ashore at Hamburg or Bremen suddenly became “German” by the time it arrived inland. Still, the new measures did further impede the natural development of north-south trade.

Although the Continental System did not succeed in destroying the British economy, it did result in a significant increase in French exports to the states of the Confederation. Exports would peak in 1810 at 143.4 million francs; this represented thirty-eight percent of France’s total exports.⁸⁴ They then declined to under one-third during the 1811-2 economic crisis. They declined further in 1813 to 72.5 million francs as the empire began to dissolve. (The longer term effects on France were nonetheless favorable. Exports to the ex-*Rheinbund* states would later rebound to 81.2 million in 1815, even after the restoration of the dominant north-south networks.) Except for 1813 (when licensed trade with Britain accounted for close to one-third of France’s exports), Germany became under the Continental System the most important destination for French goods. Statistics for Italy’s trade with France and Germany show a similar improvement in the position of the French Empire in this triangular trade.⁸⁵ At the same time, Italian exports to Germany declined dramatically, from almost 26.5 million lira in 1810 to

⁸³ Dunan, 364-5; Dufraisse, “Blocus Continental,” in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 241-2; Frank Edgar Melvin, *Napoleon’s Navigation System: a Study of Trade Control during the Continental Blockade* (New York: AMS Press, 1970); Heckshler, 16-7.

⁸⁴ See “Table III-A: French Exports to the *Rheinbund* and the Kingdoms of Spain and Italy, An XIV-1814,” in Appendix III for the full statistics on French exports between September 1805 and December 1817. Because two sources are provided for France’s exports in 1810, I averaged the two numbers.

⁸⁵ See “Table III-B: Value of Imports and Exports (in millions of lira) of the kingdom of Italy in 1810 and 1812,” in Appendix III. A significant portion of this increased trade with the French Empire after 1810 was due to the annexation of the Papal States and Holland by France.

just over 7.5 million in 1812, which was exactly the result Napoleon had intended when he intervened in the Italo-Bavarian negotiations.

The long-term effects of the Continental System on Bavaria were mixed. It had encouraged the use of alternatives to colonial and English goods, which helped develop Bavaria's industry. The rise in sugar prices, as well as of other colonial products, also encouraged the cultivation of sugar beet, as well as various alternatives to coffee. The Bavarian textile industry received a boost as well, as the region around Augsburg became a major producer of muslins and printed calico. Gustav Schanz, writing after the fall of Napoleon, estimated that in Franconia alone 300 million francs worth of textiles were produced annually during the blockade, a figure that fell precipitously to 175 million in 1815 when English goods again flooded Europe.⁸⁶ To meet demand, an increased amount of raw cotton was imported from the Levant. Local ceramic making also developed to replace English china.⁸⁷ Some of these new industries would survive into the post-war economy, although cheaper, mass-produced English goods overwhelmed others after 1814.⁸⁸

Overall, Bavaria was one of the first failures of the Continental System, although this was not immediately apparent.⁸⁹ The Bavarians had almost immediately begun to allow smuggling in

⁸⁶ George Schanz. *Zur Geschichte der Colonisation und Industrie In Franken*, 2 Vols. (Erlangen, GE: A. Deichart, 1884), Vol. I, 328, 334-5, cited in Dunan, 294. The figures given by Schanz were in part a result of the higher price of cloth caused by the Continental System. Ironically, the Bavarians after 1815 emulated the Continental System by adopting protectionist policies to defend their industry from cheaper English products.

⁸⁷ Dunan, 294.

⁸⁸ Dufraisse, "Blocus Continental," *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 251; Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany*, 111-2, 147.

⁸⁹ For the reasons for the failure of the System, see Silvia Marzagalli, "Le blocus continental pouvait-il

order to meet domestic demand for finished goods and raw materials. Moreover, some Italian merchants continued to privilege Germany as a market over France, despite the agreements that gave significant advantages to the latter. What those agreements did in fact reinforce was the belief among many that the Continental System was unfair and, more importantly, detrimental to the Bavarian economy. As Marcel Dunan observed: “In the fight to the death with England, Napoleon could have (had) the continent with him or against him. The egoism of his economic politics—of which he was not perhaps the master—turned the peoples [of Europe] against his domination.”⁹⁰

Dunan argues that the Continental System could have been much more effective if an inter-European market had been allowed to develop through a uniform lowering of tariffs, something with which Otto might have agreed. In that case, continental trade really could have replaced France’s lost colonial markets. It would then have been in the economic interest of the satellite states to enforce the System, and thus protect their own markets, against English manufactures in this enlarged “free trade” zone. The Comte d’Hauterive, chief of the Foreign Ministry’s southern division, had in fact proposed such a “federative” economic system as early as 1800 in his *De l’état de la France à la fin de l’an VIII*. In it he proposed France and its allies work together to defeat English commerce for the benefit of their own agriculture and industry, thereby creating “a European co-prosperity sphere,” as one historian has put it.⁹¹ Instead, the

réussir?,” in *Napoléon et l’Europe*, 103-14.

⁹⁰ Dunan, 367.

⁹¹ Alexandre Maurice Blanc de Launette, Comte d’Hauterive. *De l’état de la France à la fin de l’an VIII* (Paris: Heinrichs, 1800), 48-61, 101-13. For the argument that the *Etat de l’an VIII* represented a proposal for a French-dominated European co-prosperity sphere, see Stein and Stein, 402-8.

increasing rigor of the System only made smuggling more attractive.⁹²

As for the British, they were able to make up for some of the loss of European markets by increased trade with the Americas. The dissolution of the Spanish Empire after 1808 proved to be a great benefit. Thus, despite a serious financial crisis in 1810, Britain's economy survived until Tsar Alexander's opening of Russia's ports in 1811 finally broke the blockade.⁹³

Otto and the 1809 Campaign

To all outward appearances, the French Empire seemed in 1808 to be in the ascendancy, and Otto's position in Bavaria as secure as France's dominant position in Germany. Yet, according to Otto's correspondence, there were signs that all was not well. Otto repeatedly worried in his reports about future plots and revolts he suspected would be instigated by Austria during its next war with France. The Austrians had begun once again to spread anti-French propaganda in southern Germany in the hopes of provoking an uprising. Otto himself reported cries of "Long Live Francis II!" (Francis' old title as Holy Roman Emperor) in Innsbruck.⁹⁴ This suspicion extended to Catholic bishops in and near Bavaria, leading to the temporary exile of the Bishop of Coire.⁹⁵ He also reported that the Austrians were raising a militia and supporting insurgents in the Tyrol, annexed by Bavaria in 1806.⁹⁶

In light of these developments, Montgelas became increasingly concerned with his country's position as a front line state of any war against Austria. There were only limited

⁹² Dufraisse, "Blocus Continental," *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 249-50.

⁹³ François Crouzet. *L'économie britannique et le Blocus Continental*, 2 Vols. (Paris: PUF, 1958).

⁹⁴ Otto to Champagny, no. 274. March 17, 1809. [9 PM] AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 131-2.

⁹⁵ Otto to Champagny. July 20, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 197.

⁹⁶ Otto to Champagny. July 13, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 183-6.

French troops available to defend it, and Spain was drawing more away every day. Montgelas was not convinced by assurances that Russia would intimidate Austria into abandoning its ambitions in Germany, noting that since Vienna was already secretly mobilizing, it intended to go to war.⁹⁷ Steps were immediately taken to bring the Bavarian army up to strength with the recruitment of 8,000 additional soldiers.

By the beginning of 1809, war between France and Austria appeared inevitable. As in 1805 and 1807, this threat crowded out all other concerns for the French embassy. Otto turned his attention from trade agreements to gathering rations and instructing Bavaria's War Ministry on how the emperor wished their army to be organized.⁹⁸

Gathering military intelligence had once again become one of Otto's most pressing tasks. Given 10,000 francs for espionage, he paid the Bavarian Commissioners General stationed on the border for information.⁹⁹ His work, along with that of France's other diplomats and agents in

⁹⁷ Otto to Champagny. August 8, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 225-8. Montgelas' fears proved well founded when Russia's contribution to the 1809 campaign consisted of occupying Galicia without even engaging the Austrian army. Tsar Alexander's decision to turn on Napoleon appears to have been encouraged by Talleyrand's suggestion that Napoleon be defeated before he enslaved all of Europe. Talleyrand by this time was in the pay of both the British and Austrians.

⁹⁸ Champagny to Otto. February 18, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 80. The Bavarian army performed splendidly during the 1809 campaign. An account of this can be found in John H. Gill. *With Eagles to Glory: Napoleon and his German Allies in the 1809 Campaign* (London: Greenhill Books, 1992), 64-126, 321-85. Also see Otto to Champagny. March 3, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 104-6.

⁹⁹ Napoleon to Champagny. February 23, 1809. AAE. M+D France Vol. 1782, fol. 52-52 bis; Champagny to Otto. February 24, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13, fol. 203. Otto was told that "it is [the Emperor's] desire that you organize a secret organization in Munich, composed of intelligent and trustworthy men who can report from Upper and Lower Austria, Styria, Carinthia, in Middle Bohemia, and on the routes of Vienna

Germany, resulted in a remarkably accurate picture of the numbers, movements and positions of the Austrian army.¹⁰⁰ The collaboration between Otto and the Bavarians in this regard had clearly worked well.

Joinville, Commissioner of Ordnance to Napoleon's Army of Germany, also instructed the ambassador to prepare for the production and transport of 50,000 daily rations, and to stockpile an additional 20,000 quintals of flour.¹⁰¹ In keeping with the importance of the campaign, Otto began, as in 1805, to correspond directly with the emperor, keeping him informed about the latest developments in Germany.¹⁰² At the same time, Marshal Berthier ordered him to speed his efforts to reorganize the Bavarian army.¹⁰³ Otto thereupon acted without waiting for additional instructions from the Foreign Minister. His suggestion that the kingdom be allowed to seize property belonging to nobles who had chosen to fight for Austria was an

and Prague, what is [being] done, [including] troop movements, the number and state of local arsenals, the transport of artillery and munitions, the morale of the troops, the militia, [and] its leaders, as well as the overall dispositions of the inhabitants." Also see Otto to Champagny. April 5, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 215-7.

¹⁰⁰ Historian John Gill suggests that French intelligence was "95 per cent accurate, a remarkable achievement by any standard" in its assessment of the Austrian army, right down to the positions of individual regiments. Gill, *1809: Thunder on the Danube, Napoleon's Defeat of the Hapsburgs Vol I: Abensberg*. (London: Frontline Books, 2008), 88.

¹⁰¹ Otto to Champagny. April 5, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 215-7.

¹⁰² Otto to Napoleon. March 15, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13. fol. 234-7.

¹⁰³ Berthier to Otto. March 20, 1809, CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13. fol. 245-6.

As Chief of Staff of the Army of Germany, Berthier was temporarily in command until the emperor himself took command. Otto reported the strength of the Bavarian army as being around 40,000. See Otto to Champagny. February 6, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 54-7.

indication both of his own independence, and the concern he sometimes showed for his Bavarian hosts.¹⁰⁴

As in 1805, the fighting began on Bavarian territory. However, Napoleon was soon able to chase the Austrians down the Danube to Vienna. But even if the immediate danger had passed, the Bavarians were still burdened by French demands, as Otto continually pressed them to send replacements to the front.¹⁰⁵ He also had to deal with the usual problems of French soldiers requisitioning food, horses, and other equipment without compensation.¹⁰⁶ In June, the townspeople surrounding the fortress of Passau began complaining that soldiers were demolishing homes to create a *glacis*.¹⁰⁷ Montgelas requested that the demolition be stopped, or if not, that compensation be paid. Champagny's response was that demolition was necessary, and told Otto to use his influence to suppress the complaints.¹⁰⁸

Otto distinguished himself in 1809 as one of the chief agents of French victory. He was a key intermediary between the Army of Germany and the Bavarian government. He also oversaw the purchase of supplies, horses, wagons and barges.¹⁰⁹ All of this was done without any instructions from the Foreign Minister. Although Champagny was less than a day's ride from Berthier and Napoleon during the campaign, Otto and the chief of staff corresponded directly. It

¹⁰⁴ Otto to Champagny. May 29, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 269-71.

¹⁰⁵ Champagny [Vienna] to Otto. June 1, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 277; Otto to Champagny, no. 343. June 30, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 363-5.

¹⁰⁶ See for example, Otto to Champagny. July 18, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 394-5.

¹⁰⁷ Otto to Champagny. June 10, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 302-3.

¹⁰⁸ Champagny [Vienna] to Otto. June 14, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 309.

¹⁰⁹ Montgelas to Otto. August 19, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 14, fol. 157; Baron de Gravenurth [Ulm] to Otto. August 22, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 14, fol. 158.

was thought that including the Minister would only slow operations. It is clear that once again Otto was acting on his own initiative. His interaction with the Bavarian government, several French ministries and the emperor himself, shows how necessary his role was in making the imperial system work efficiently. Far from being reprimanded for disregarding his own minister, he was promoted in early 1810 to ambassador to Austria, second in prestige only to Russia. Since the streamlined procedures in which he had participated had contributed to victory, Napoleon (never a stickler for bureaucratic niceties) had clearly been willing to excuse Otto's presumption in writing directly to his chief-of-staff.

The Bavarians were at first jubilant about the Austrian defeat.¹¹⁰ This celebratory mood did not last long, however, once the total cost of the war was known—twenty-two million florins, equivalent to two years of the annual budget. Aside from that, the 1809 campaign did show that the reforms introduced by Montgelas and Max Joseph under Otto's benevolent gaze had succeeded in transforming Bavaria into a more efficient state able to organize a modern conscript army. This convinced Montgelas to order the expansion of the Bavarian National Guard, following the recommendations first made by the ambassador in 1805.¹¹¹ But while the administrative reforms introduced by Montgelas had contributed to Napoleon's victory, they also were responsible for the revolt of Bavaria's Tyrolean province.

Otto and the Tyrol

The Tyrol was the most unruly of the provinces given to Bavaria by the Treaty of

¹¹⁰ Fol. 380-2. Otto to Champagny. July 10, 1809 AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 380-2; Otto to Champagny. July 13, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, Fol. 382-4.

¹¹¹ Otto to Champagny. July 15, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 384-6.

Pressburg in December 1805. It had long been a Hapsburg possession. The Tyrolese also had a long history of defending their traditional way of life against administrative interference. In 1809, Otto had reported that anti-French propaganda was still being spread there, and that old loyalties to the Hapsburgs remained. He predicted that an uprising would begin the moment Austrian armies attacked.¹¹² Otto also believed that any attempt to retake the Tyrol would be difficult, considering both the terrain and the fanaticism of its inhabitants.

Once the uprising began, Otto blamed Munich's policies for it. It was a result, he insisted, of moving too quickly to introduce administrative uniformity without replacing the traditional institutions upon which the Tyrolese had come to rely. (That the new Bavarian administration failed to improve the lives of the Tyrolese is borne out by the historical record.) Otto drew a parallel between opposition in the Tyrol to the enlightened reforms of Joseph II in the 1780s, and the hatred of reforms instituted by Bavaria.¹¹³ Except under Joseph, Hapsburg policy had been one of benign neglect, something the Tyrolese remembered fondly. The result was a revolt in 1809 that took ten months and almost the entire Bavarian army, along with several thousand French troops, to suppress. It also led Napoleon and Otto to seriously question whether the Tyrol should remain in Bavarian hands.

Almost every change Munich had imposed contributed to the uprising. New taxes were unpopular, especially when combined with efforts to end the inflation that had been a result of Hapsburg monetary policy. More importantly, the Tyrolese had seen the introduction of

¹¹² Otto to Champagny. February 15, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 72: "Reports that the Bavarian government receives from the Tyrol reveal that the influence of Austrian secret agents has not ceased. The inhabitants are so hostile they no longer even attempt to hide it. They speak with enthusiasm of the next Austrian invasion and [their] deliverance from a foreign yoke."

¹¹³ Otto to Champagny. August 27, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 458-60.

administrative uniformity as a violation of ancient privileges.¹¹⁴ That Bavarian officials had very negative opinions of the Tyrolese, believing them “superstitious bumpkins whose obduracy could be overcome only by strict application of government regulations,” only added to the problem.¹¹⁵

The Continental System also caused significant hardship, since the Tyrol had historically been a crossroads for trade between Germany and Italy. Bavarian attacks on Tyrolese religious practices gave even greater offense. The people did not want their priests and bishops forced to swear loyalty to the King of Bavaria, nor did they want them approved by Munich, as was proposed in a Concordat being negotiated with Rome. The closing of several monasteries and the interference of the central government in local festivals was additional irritants. Despite being fellow Catholics, Bavarians were widely suspected of being only one step removed from Protestants or atheists.

The example of the Tyrol seems to be a better example of Stuart Woolf’s model of cultural imperialism than most of those he cites in *Napoleon’s Transformation of Europe*. The Bavarians exhibited both a belief in their cultural superiority and a single-minded commitment to reform, both of which Woolf regards as two of the defining characteristics of the Napoleonic Empire. Desiring to create a uniform administration, they never took into account the insular nature of the province. Bavarian officials pursued reforms without reflection until a revolt showed them how wrong they were.

Napoleon took note of all this, and, following Otto’s advice, decided to give part of the

¹¹⁴ The Bavarian Constitution of 1808 (which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter) was not seen by the Tyrolese as an adequate replacement for their ancient rights under the Hapsburgs. Gill, *With Eagles to Glory*, 322.

¹¹⁵ Gill, *With Eagles to Glory*, 323.

Tyrol to Italy.¹¹⁶ He had previously considered transferring the entire province, complaining that, “the Tyrol would have even revolted against the [Hapsburgs] if they had behaved like the Bavarians.”¹¹⁷ This reveals once again how Napoleon put the maintenance of order within the Empire above reform. It also demonstrates the importance of Otto, for it was only due to his intervention that Bavaria kept even part of the province.¹¹⁸ Once again he had helped determine German borders. As a result, Bavaria was able to keep 222,000 of its newly acquired subjects.¹¹⁹

Conclusions

France’s exploitation of Bavaria was the result of the imbalance of power between the two nations. Napoleon’s constant demands for money and men almost bankrupted the kingdom. Repeated requests by Max Joseph and Montgelas to reduce demands Bavaria’s finances to recover fell on deaf ears. If Napoleon had truly wanted to export a French model of reform, he would have done this. He did not. His aim was clear. It was the exploitation of the rest of Europe for the benefit of France. He also never lost an opportunity to pass some of the burden of the wars onto their Bavarian ally.

This exploitation also extended to commercial relationships. Paris insisted the kingdom be open to French imports, while French markets remain closed. The Bavarian government had originally hoped that growing trade with the rest of Europe under the French imperium would

¹¹⁶ Champagny to von Cetto. January 3, 1810. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 186, fol. 3-4.

¹¹⁷ Napoleon cited in Dunan, 270.

¹¹⁸ “Treaty with Bavaria for the execution of the Treaty of Vienna.” February 28, 1810. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 14, fol. 215-9.

¹¹⁹ Kerautret, “1810: un tournant pour l’Allemagne?,” in *1810: Le tournant de l’Empire*, Sous la direction de Thierry Lentz. (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2010), 269.

benefit all, while simultaneously providing badly needed customs revenues for its own treasury.¹²⁰ They were wrong. Even the attempt to reestablish Italy as a necessary market for its exports was prevented by Napoleon's agents. The Bavarians were reduced once again to futile complaints to a French government that refused to listen. Combined with the Continental System, France's mercantilist policies worked almost entirely against Bavarian trade (even if it did help some sectors of local manufacturing).

Since the imperial system was so oppressive, why did Bavarians continue to provide the cooperation necessary for successful French exploitation? And why didn't they break with France before October 1813? There are several reasons. First, leaving the alliance risked the nation's existence. Napoleon could have easily crushed the Bavarian state and partitioned it, if he had wanted to. The Bavarian leaders always understood this. Fear was a powerful force in compelling obedience. Second, defection to the Allies meant collaborating with Bavaria's historical enemy Austria.¹²¹ As the authors of mediatization, the French had also convinced the Bavarians that they were the only power willing to guarantee the integrity of their enlarged kingdom.¹²² Third, exploitation took years to be fully implemented, and Otto was very good at

¹²⁰ Max Joseph had reversed the protectionist policies of his uncle by substantially lowering Bavaria's tariffs on most goods. Dunan, 334.

¹²¹ In the Treaty of Ried that brought Bavaria onto the Allied side, Austrian Foreign Minister Klemens Von Metternich was obliged to promise that the kingdom would keep most of its acquisitions, (although the Tyrol and several other territories were eventually returned). For the text of the Treaty, see Georg F. de Martens. *Nouveau recueil de traités d'alliance, de paix, de trêve, de neutralité, de commerce, de limites, d'échange etc. et de plusieurs autres, actes servant à la connaissance des relations étrangères des puissances et états de l'Europe tant dans leur rapport mutuel que dans celui envers les puissances et états dans autres parties du globe depuis 1808 jusqu'à présent* (Göttingue: Librairie de Dieterich, 1817), Tome I, 610-4. For an analysis, see Schroeder, 478-84.

¹²² Schroeder, 252. Austria and Britain had always opposed mediatization. (Prussia in contrast had

excusing it as being only temporary. Finally, Montgelas feared that without French support all those reforms he had so long desired would be overturned. Otto was not necessarily a friend of reform. He was a friend of reformers. That was good enough for Montgelas. The first minister was most appreciative of how much faster and further he was able to reform the state because of Otto's benevolent regard. He was willing to endure the temporary burdens of empire for the long term transformation of the nation. France, despite all of Napoleon's crimes, could thus still be seen as the protector of those reforms, in contrast to reactionary Austria.

Otto's role in obfuscating the exploitative nature of the imperial system was another vital element of his embassy. When the ambassador, understanding the state of the Bavarian treasury, proposed that a permanent subsidy be extended, the emperor swiftly rejected it. In contrast to his superiors, Otto understood that a bankrupt kingdom could not provide the soldiers and money that Napoleon wanted. A man of subtler temperament than his master, he fully understood how necessary it was to make exploitation more acceptable to Munich. His efforts to alleviate the kingdom's financial burdens went a long way to convincing Montgelas and the other ministers that he might again intercede in the future to end France's exploitation of their country, thus helping to convince them to remain loyal. In the end, every day Bavaria continued to be a dutiful ally was a victory for Otto. This was arguably his greatest contribution to the imperial system.

As successful as it was, exploitation was of course not the only area in which the Foreign Ministry interacted with the satellites. The Bavarian embassy played a role in a variety of areas. These are the subject of Chapter Five.

deliberately stayed out of the politics of southern Germany.) Although the Russians had supported mediatization early on, their decision to join the Third Coalition in 1805 made their position ambiguous.

Chapter Five: Reform and the Role of the Foreign Ministry in Bavaria's Domestic

Politics

Max Joseph and Montgelas were as concerned with domestic reforms as they were with threats about the survival of Bavaria. This chapter examines the informal influence Otto and the Foreign Ministry had on those reforms, including the drafting of a concordat with the Papacy. This will allow a comparison in subsequent chapters with the efforts of Napoleon's brother Joseph to implement reforms in Spain. Finally, it will explore the role of Otto and the Foreign Ministry in the dissemination of propaganda in Bavaria and the rest of Germany.

Bavaria had been forced to cede control of its foreign policy to France. Whenever it came time to go to war, it was expected to dutifully follow Napoleon. But Bavaria was largely free in its pursuit of domestic reforms. It was Montgelas and Max Joseph who took advantage of the French presence for the reforms they had intended to introduce since 1799. Some, such as the secularization of church property, and the introduction of administrative uniformity, clearly used a French model. To quote Montgelas' memoirs on ending manorial privileges:

Privileges still existed in 1799, but they were already weakened by changing [public] opinion. The French revolution had fortified spirits. One began to speak openly of reforms.¹

¹ Maximilian Joseph Graf von Montgelas. *Denkwürdigkeiten des Grafen Maximilian Joseph v. Montgelas über die innere Staatsverwaltung Bayerns 1799-1817*, translated by M. Doeberl. (München: Beck, 1908), 101-2. Montgelas' memoir on domestic policy provides an important summary of which reforms he considered most important during his time as Max Joseph's primary collaborator, along with insight into the motivations behind the reforms. His reflections on foreign affairs can be found in: Montgelas, *Denkwürdigkeiten des Bayerischen Staatsministers Maximilian Grafen von Montgelas (1799 – 1817)* (Stuttgart: Verlag der J.G. Cotta, 1887).

Bavaria's domestic reforms, excepting those that affected the military, took place with little direct input from Otto. This was partly because their implementation had begun several years before Bavaria became a satellite. More importantly, it was because, contrary to the assertions of such historians as Stuart Woolf and Michael Broers, Napoleon considered only military and administrative reforms important.

For Otto, however, his acquiescence in the great changes that were planned was useful in persuading Max Joseph to remain loyal to France. The French military presence neutralized Austrian attempts to hinder Bavaria's domestic reforms and their efforts to add new territory through mediatization. All of this cost Napoleon nothing, while it won him friends among some elements of the local population.

The Bavarian government built on a modest reform tradition that extended back into the eighteenth century. Montgelas was also helped by profound changes that had already begun in both agriculture and industry, which had created groups supportive of administrative and legal changes. This helped make reform much more successful than in Spain. This chapter must therefore begin with an overview of Bavaria's society and economy from the end of the eighteenth century.

Bavaria: A Society and Economy in Transition

In 1794, following the loss of its Rhenish provinces, the Electorate had a population of 1,248,491.² As noted in Chapter Three, the mediatization of knightly states, free cities, and ecclesiastical territories led by 1805 to a significant increase in population to 2,225,000. The gains from annexations following the War of the Third Coalition were equally impressive. By

² Dunan, 128.

1807, Max Joseph could count a population of 3,141,636.³

Annexation had also added important industries to the kingdom. Nuremberg contributed artisanal enterprises such as the manufacture of eyeglasses, compasses, watches, clocks, mirrors, musical instruments, and maps.⁴ It was also a major transit point for goods that between 1790 and 1800 exceeded 400,000 quintals annually.⁵

Despite this, Bavaria remained largely rural and agricultural. In 1805, just 18.8 percent of the population lived in towns and cities. None had a population of more than 40,000.⁶ While introducing their reforms, Montgelas and Max Joseph were always aware they were dealing with a relatively conservative, rural population to whom reforms had to be introduced gradually and carefully. Still, Bavaria could count on an urban population larger than many European states.⁷ Otto recognized the potential support of the urban middle classes for the reforms the government was pursuing. Historian Brendan Simms points to an additional, powerful desire for social and legal reform among many peasants, who had been demanding equal rights long before any

³ “Report on the Bavarian Census.” Otto to Champagny. April 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 112-24. The statistics for the 1794 and 1805 censuses are drawn from Dunan, 149 and endnote 33, in Dunan, 546. The Duchy of Bavaria was the largest territory within the Electorate.

⁴ Dunan, 147.

⁵ “Mémoire.” AAE. CP Allemagne Vol. 47 (Petites principautés, Nuremberg), fol. 251, cited in Dunan, 148.

⁶ Endnote 33, in Dunan, 546.

⁷ The 1794 census for the province of Old Bavaria allows an extrapolation of the population of the rest of the kingdom; 172,251 farmers and peasants in Old Bavaria (nearly sixty-four percent of the total), 66,310 professionals and artisans (24.5 percent), 9,419 nobles (3.4 percent), 5,209 priests and monks (2 percent), and 16,534 without category (6 percent) of a total population of 269,733. Dunan, 128, and endnote 8, in Dunan, 526-7.

German government was willing to grant them.⁸

Montgelas and Max Joseph were determined to grant them much of this, including the abolition of manorial rights. These were officially ended in 1808, although peasants and their landlords continued to haggle over the terms of compensation.⁹ In the *Gutherrschaft* system of landownership that had dominated Bavaria before 1805, the landlord owned the land as well as the occasional labor of the peasants, who paid a fixed rent. The Catholic Church had been the largest landowner, owning 14,000 of the 30,000 farms.¹⁰ The expropriation of Church property and the transfer to farmers begun during the Napoleonic period unleashed their productive energies, since they could now fully profit from their lands. Moreover, as with the sale of these Bavarian *biens nationaux* (the term comes from Church properties sold in France during the revolution to pay the debts of the *ancien régime*), the individuals who bought this property could be counted on to support the government against any efforts by the Church or foreign governments such as Austria to overturn the land settlement.¹¹

A more detailed account of the Bavarian economy in the 1790s is presented by the statistical survey for the Duchy of Bavaria, the largest administrative division within the Electorate. It contains a detailed breakdown of artisans, as well as the value of their products.¹² According to its tables, 40,765 masters (around half of whom lived in Munich), 26,107

⁸ Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany, 1779-1850*, 22.

⁹ Martin Kitchen. *The Political Economy of Germany, 1815-1914* (Montreal: Queen's University Press, 1978), 14.

¹⁰ Woolf, 200. The sale of Church property had two advantages. It provided the state with money, while weakening the ability of the Church to oppose reform.

¹¹ This included governmental regulations that still restricted the free movement of peasants. Kitchen, 14-5.

¹² "Statistique des métiers du Duché de Bavière d'après le recensement de 1792," in Dunan, 130-3.

journeymen, and 6,891 apprentices produced goods for domestic consumption worth 2.8 million florins; those for export were valued at 355,727 florins. Leatherworkers and furriers generated a good part of this (666,083 florins), followed by cotton workers (610,466 florins), and those working in other textiles (415,398 florins). The low level of exports (only 12.6 percent of total production, typical of the economies of the period), as well as the overall importance of textiles is striking.¹³

Agriculture remained at the center of the economy. Much of it was still carried out according to the three-field system introduced during the Middle Ages, which left one-third of the land fallow each year.¹⁴ The rising population of Germany, however, encouraged the adoption of more efficient and scientific methods. Some farms began to experiment with English methods of crop rotation, albeit on a small scale. Still, the publication in 1811 of Albrecht von Thaer's *The Principles of Rational Agriculture* indicated a strong interest for scientific farming.¹⁵ Von Thaer suggested an "intensified three-field system" whereby the third normally left fallow was devoted to potato and clover. The remaining two-thirds were to be planted with staple crops like corn or grain. Von Thaer's system required significant additional inputs of work and money, but farmers who adopted it saw a higher return per acre, and a higher quality of produce. His proposals would later prove to be a powerful spur to the development of German agriculture in the nineteenth century.

There were also powerful conservative forces in Bavaria. Village and town life were still very traditional. The family and then the community were at its center. Above them ruled a

¹³ Dunan, 137.

¹⁴ Dunan, 128.

¹⁵ Kitchen, 15-6.

small number of landowners who had enormous power. Challenges to community norms were subject to everything from ostracism and the stocks to collective violence. The persistence of the guilds also proved a powerful barrier to rapid social or economic change. Even after their abolition in the 1808 constitution there was no sudden development of a free market economy. Many artisans regretted their demise, fearing that mass production would destroy them. Guilds therefore continued to exist, even if only as private associations. So, while in theory any person could now become an artisan and take up a skilled trade, few did so, and it would not be until the 1860s that a true free market began to emerge in southern Germany.¹⁶

What is most striking is that despite powerful elements opposed to change, economic conditions in Bavaria were still conducive to reform. Those members of Bavarian society that supported this were by no means a majority, but they were numerous enough so that, with the exception of the Tyrol, opposition never reached the point of open revolt. Despite grumblings, most Bavarians went on with their lives while reforms were promulgated. Tacit acceptance, rather than enthusiasm, was all the Bavarian state needed for its efforts to succeed.

Bavarian Reforms

As Marcel Dunan said, “the great idea of Napoleon is the reorganization of Germany.”¹⁷ While referring to the redrawing of boundaries, he might equally have been writing about internal reforms across the Confederation of the Rhine. Bavaria was one of the German state that was transformed the most during this period.

¹⁶ Kitchen, 18-22. Increasing competition with both foreign crops and industry did spur to the introduction of new methods and technologies of farming and industry.

¹⁷ Marcel Dunan, “Napoleon et ‘les allemagnes’,” (extract from the Institut Napoléon, 1946), 8, cited in Ellis, *Napoleon’s Continental Blockade*, 21.

Reforms included administrative reorganization into uniform units, the reordering of government finances, improvements of the military, the creation and expansion of a more powerful state bureaucracy, now recruited on the basis of merit, the improvement of education, the elimination of the last vestiges of serfdom, the abolition of torture, and last but not least, the promulgation of Bavaria's first written constitution. All this followed upon a tradition of autocratic reform. Max Joseph's predecessors, Maximilian Joseph III (r. 1745-77) had already introduced a new law code (the Codex Maximilianus), and a system of compulsory education (even if financial problems prevented it from being implemented). He had in addition founded the Academy of Sciences, and expelled the Jesuit order.

This tradition slackened under his successor, Karl Theodore, notorious for his dislike of all things "French." But it did not die. Although usually seen as an opponent of reform, recent German historians have argued that Karl Theodore in certain areas actually prepared the way for the reforms of the 1800s, through changes to Bavaria's administration, laws, and system of taxation.¹⁸ Fiscal reform was particularly important, since it increased the revenues of the central government and prepared the way for Bavaria's later economic development.¹⁹ Moreover, the Bavarian bureaucracy was able to gain experience that would serve them well when greater changes were introduced on a much larger scale under Max Joseph.²⁰

Many reforms were driven by the need to deal with military threats. Most historians of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Germany regard reform as being driven by the "primacy of foreign policy." To quote Wilhelm Dilthey: "Perhaps the most powerful motive for the great

¹⁸ For an overview of this reassessment, see Ferdinand Kramer, "Bavaria: Reform and Staatsintegration," in *German History* Vol. 20, no. 3 (July 2002): 354-72.

¹⁹ Kramer, 363-4, 369.

²⁰ Kramer, 371-2.

domestic reforms of the era of enlightened absolutism was the need to mobilize resources for external struggle through the most intensive cultivation of all spiritual and material strengths of the state.”²¹ Economic reforms were a means to generate tax revenue for the army. Even educational reforms were seen as a way of developing a “national spirit” (*Nationalgeist*) that would encourage men to sacrifice themselves for the state.²² Bavaria had good reason to strengthen itself against foreign enemies, having been invaded or occupied (sometimes by more than one great power at a time) in 1778-9, 1792-7, 1799-1801, 1805, and 1809.²³ The government hoped to avoid any further occupations through the French alliance, and its own reformed military.

It was the Bavarian army that underwent the most important changes during Otto’s embassy. There was already something of a tradition of reform here too. In 1788 it had had only 7,000 men. The following year it had been reorganized, professionalized, and expanded to 20,000 under the direction of the American Benjamin Thompson.²⁴ By the time Max Joseph had

²¹ Wilhelm Dilthey, *Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Geistes* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1992), 179, cited in Simms, *The Impact of Napoleon: Prussian High Politics, Foreign Policy, and the Crisis of the Executive, 1797-1806* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 5.

²² The term “Nationalgeist” is drawn from Montgelas’ 1796 Ansbach Memorandum, which served as the template for the later Bavarian reforms. Karl A. Schleunes. *Schooling and Society: the Politics of Education in Bavaria and Prussia, 1750-1850* (Oxford: Berg Publishers Limited, 1989), 51.

²³ In 1776, the Bavarian army had claimed 9,000 men, but had only 5,000 under arms. “Report by Hugh Elliot to the British Foreign Office on the State of Bavaria,” 1776, cited in Bernand, 6.

²⁴ Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford (1753-1814) was a colorful character. Having fought as a loyalist in the American Revolution, he later traveled to Europe, where he met Karl Theodore in 1785. He became a close friend, and was later ennobled as Count Rumford. Among his reforms were the creation of a professional Bavarian military academy, longer terms of service for soldiers, and an improved artillery corps. Harford, 17-9.

become Elector, it had declined again to 16,000. It was not until the introduction of conscription in 1804 that expansion was resumed.²⁵ The results were impressive. Bavaria put around 30,000 men in the field in 1805, and 20,000 in 1807.²⁶ By 1809 it could muster 62,600 soldiers and officers (organized into fifty-seven infantry battalions, thirty-six cavalry squadrons and four artillery battalions).²⁷ Yet this expansion would not have been possible without the administrative and financial improvements introduced by Montgelas. In contrast, the attempt to provide universal education proved a failure. An examination of this helps explain why reform succeeded in some areas and failed in another.

Administrative and Educational Reforms

Montgelas's reforms had several goals. One was to create a more bureaucratic nation-state. A second was to institute the secular learning that was a hallmark of the Enlightenment. This meant reducing the power of the Church and reforming education. A third, inspired by Enlightenment humanitarianism, was to reform the legal system, and end the most oppressive forms of religious discrimination. Montgelas' memoirs make clear that these aims were already firmly fixed in his mind when Max Joseph first succeeded. All of them drew him to one

²⁵ Shartle, 40.

²⁶ According to "État effectif des troupes fournies par L'Electeur de Bavière à Bamberg, le 2 Octobre, 1805," cited in Scott Bowden, *Napoleon and Austerlitz: An Unprecedentedly Detailed Combat Study of Napoleon's Epic Ulm-Austerlitz Campaigns of 1805* (Chicago: Emperor's Press, 1997), 453, the Bavarian army reported 24,405 officers and soldiers in the two divisions that met Marshal Bernadotte's Corps at Bamberg. The remaining 6,000 were posted to various garrisons and other detachments. For a more detailed discussion of the numbers Bavaria contributed to the Napoleonic Wars, see Jean Sarramon, "Alliés (contingents)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 70-1.

²⁷ Dunan, 89; endnote 61, in Dunan, 482.

conclusion. The power and influence of the traditional orders - the nobility and the Church - had to be reduced. This meant the elimination of all manorial rights and the establishment of limited religious toleration and legal equality for all Bavarian subjects.²⁸

Four major ministries were created for the day-to-day operation of the new state: War, Foreign Affairs, Finances and Interior. A Council of Ministers, supported by a Council of State for policy-making, was charged with implementing government programs.²⁹ The old provinces were eliminated and replaced by fifteen administrative districts or circles, each run by a *Generalkommissar*.³⁰ Modeled on the departments of the French Republic, they were approximately of equal size and population. This, as Montgelas observed, drastically reduced the number of “intermediary authorities.”³¹

These changes were reinforced by a civil service reform, codified by the *Staatsdienerpragmatik* statute of January 1, 1805 that established a salaried corps of officials. Although the civil service continued to draw about one-quarter of its personnel from the nobility (which was less than one percent of the population), this was only because they were better educated (and connected) than the average commoner.³² Nonetheless, this new civil service,

²⁸ For a more thorough examination of Bavarian religious reforms, see Harold C. Vedeler, “The Genesis of Toleration Reforms in Bavaria under Montgelas,” *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 10, no. 4 (December 1938): 473-95.

²⁹ According to Montgelas, the Council of State was created in February 25, 1799. Like the Council of Ministers, it was based on a French model. Montgelas, *Innere*, 20; Schmitt, 23

³⁰ Grab, 104. The duties of each *Generalkommissar* were similar to those of a French departmental prefect as described in the Constitution of the Year VIII.

³¹ Montgelas, *Innere*, 29.

³² Schmitt, 23, 25.

clearly based on French models, became increasingly professional.

The new Bavarian bureaucracy in many ways became even more committed to reform than Montgelas, since the latter was willing to guarantee some special rights to the largest landowners (most of whom were nobles), even as the rights of the lesser nobility were curtailed.³³ Montgelas, fearing their power, had also charged Adam von Aretin, one of the leaders of the aristocratic party, to write the laws reforming manorial justice. But, while the 1808 Constitution eliminated seigniorial courts, the government could not afford to replace them. (Following Napoleon's fall, conservatives forced Montgelas to organize a second constitutional commission. The 1818 Constitution enshrined the remaining manorial privileges in law.) Thus, by the end of the Napoleonic era, the most important and successful reforms were the bureaucratization of the ministries, the division of the kingdom into new, uniform units, the elimination of internal barriers to trade and the free movement of peoples, the elimination of most manorial rights and the secularization of Church lands. Others included limited religious toleration and judicial reform. Altogether, the administrative reforms, when combined with the reorganization of state finances and the reduction in power of the privileged, were very important steps in achieving what Montgelas, like so many in the Enlightenment, called a reformed nation-state.³⁴ In contrast, Bavarian attempts to reform education demonstrate the limits of what the state could accomplish.

Educational reform had been the subject of much debate in Germany during the

³³ Schmitt, 31-2.

³⁴ It is still a matter of debate as to which reform model should be considered the most "progressive" among the German states. Michael Rowe believes Prussia a better example than Bavaria: Rowe, "Napoleon and the 'Modernisation' of Germany," in *Napoleon and his Empire*, 214-5.

eighteenth century. In Bavaria, it was heavily influenced by the Prussian example.³⁵ The leader of the movement there was the Swiss, J. H. Pestalozzi, who, being influenced by Rousseau's *Emile*, wanted to educate "the lower orders." Fear of increasing social dislocation (especially illegitimacy) during the century encouraged the government to see universal education as a partial solution to social problems. It was to be used to create a generation of Bavarians with proper morals, and a dutiful respect for government authority. The linguist Heinrich Braun, influenced by Pestalozzi, submitted a plan to the Bavarian government in 1770 for a system of elementary schools that were to serve the peasants and urban poor.³⁶ However, a lack of funding meant that only half of Bavaria's villages received new schools, while many of the teachers hired were "totally useless," according to reformer Lorenz von Westenrieder.³⁷ Teacher salaries were low and the job carried little status, so teaching attracted marginal individuals, including several illiterates. In addition, the Church, which had historically provided most of Bavaria's teachers, refused its help, since the government intended to fund the new system by selling ecclesiastical property.³⁸

Although Karl Theodore renewed the compulsory schooling decree in 1795, he otherwise did little to improve education. It was therefore not until Max Joseph became Elector that educational reform was again considered. According to historian Karl Schleunes, it was the defeat suffered by the Bavarian army at Hohenlinden in December 1800 that really provided the

³⁵ Schleunes, 8-49. According to Pestalozzi, the goal was the moral education of the masses.

³⁶ Schleunes, 32-4. A Benedictine theologian, Braun had served on the Council of Spiritual Affairs (whose jurisdiction included education) after 1768. Although he believed the lower orders to be lazy, stupid and immoral, he also assumed that education could cure their ignorance and teach them to behave decently.

³⁷ Schleunes, 36.

³⁸ Schleunes, 34.

new impetus for reform.³⁹

Montgelas found a supporter for his plans in the new head of the Council of Spiritual Affairs, Baron J.M. Frauenberg, a cleric, and like Montgelas, a fellow Illuminati. Under Frauenberg's direction, education was to be fundamentally transformed under the direction of a General School and Studies Directory (GSSD) that was an Education Ministry in all but name.⁴⁰

The GSSD immediately ordered compulsory school attendance for children aged six to ten. At the same time Joseph Wismayr,⁴¹ under the direction of Montgelas and Frauenberg, drew up a comprehensive school plan with government-funded elementary schools and a common curriculum. A weekly fee was to be paid by parents, and a graduation certificate required either to marry, buy real estate, or practice a trade. A September 1803 decree also ordered parents to send their children to a continuing or Sunday school until the age of eighteen. This was followed by an 1804 decree allowing Jews equal access to all levels of education. By that time all seemed ready, at least on paper, for the establishment of an almost revolutionary new educational system.

Despite these efforts, reform failed miserably. There are several reasons for this. The most important was the opposition of the Church, which insisted that the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia that had guaranteed its control of all education be honored. Although aimed primarily at moral development, the hierarchy was rightly suspicious of any curriculum informed by secular, Enlightenment ideas. (It is worth noting that even with Church assistance, there would not have been enough teachers for the new schools, due to the abolition of various

³⁹ Schleunes, 50.

⁴⁰ Schleunes, 54.

⁴¹ Wismayr, like Montgelas and Frauenberg, was a former member of the Illuminati.

teaching orders that followed mediatization and secularization.) Financial difficulties allowed the opening of only one normal school to train teachers (based on the curriculum of a disciple of Pestalozzi) in 1803. Since it could only graduate eighty teachers per year, hardly enough for the thousands of schools planned, it was never effective.⁴² These problems made full implementation of reform impossible.

As a result, education made relatively little progress in Bavaria during the Napoleonic era. The failure of the reforms was in part a direct result of the faltering finances of the Bavarian state, which in turn was due to the financial exactions of the empire. In this way French exploitation undermined efforts to implement difficult reforms in areas like education. This is significant, as it provides more evidence that reforms of this kind were not considered important by Paris. This was politically unwise, since it discouraged those reformist elements within satellite populations most inclined to support French rule.

This might be contrasted with another reform in which the French directly intervened - the negotiations that led to a concordat between Bavaria and the Church (which would only finally be ratified in 1817). Not only did the Foreign Ministry open the negotiations, it also hosted the early meetings in Paris. Otto then passed on the Papacy's proposals to Munich. Napoleon wanted an agreement because it would help secure the territorial acquisitions of 1802-6 that allowed the Bavarian state to provide additional soldiers for his campaigns.

The Bavarian Concordat

Napoleon's reconciliation with the Catholic Church was one of his most important political accomplishments. Under the Concordat, Catholicism was acknowledged as the religion

⁴² Schools were later built in Nuremburg and Augsburg.

of the majority of Frenchmen.⁴³ At the same time, the authority of the state over the Church was increased. Montgelas wanted a similar agreement. Both he and Max Joseph supported religious toleration. As Montgelas declared with quintessential Enlightenment reasoning, “free homage is the only one worthy of the divinity, and a religion that did not already exist in the heart [of the individual] is an offense against the Supreme Being.”⁴⁴ Both Montgelas and Max Joseph hoped to emulate France, which had established toleration, while acquiring a governmental veto over the appointments of bishops. They also wanted the Papacy to accept the secularization of Church property, just as the 1802 Concordat had recognized the sale of Church lands in France. Finally, they hoped it would help the state integrate thousands of Protestants who had been acquired through annexation since 1800.

The importance to Napoleon was made clear when he announced that his uncle, Cardinal Fesch, would conduct the negotiations with the Holy See in Paris.⁴⁵ As the talks continued, the Church relied on Otto to present the Pope’s proposal to the Bavarian court.⁴⁶ Even under pressure, the Papacy moved very slowly. (The final agreement would be very similar to the French. The right of the king to approve bishops was acknowledged, while the Church promised

⁴³ A limited toleration of Protestants and Jews was also incorporated into the Concordat. For an overview of Bavaria’s religious policies in the Napoleonic era, see Chester Penn Higby. *The Religious Policy of the Bavarian Government during the Napoleonic Period* (New York: AMS Press, 1967).

⁴⁴ Max Joseph, cited in Montgelas, *Innere*, 121.

⁴⁵ Fesch’s rise in the Church came with his nephew’s rise to power. He served as France’s ambassador to Rome from July 1803 to May 1806. He was later removed when he defied Napoleon by refusing to become Archbishop of Paris. “Fesch (Joseph, comte),” in Henri-Robert, 189-90; and Jean Tulard, “Fesch (Joseph),” in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 798.

⁴⁶ Otto to Talleyrand. 5 Brumaire An XII. (October 28, 1803) AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 179, fol. 312-5; and Otto to Talleyrand. July 18, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 263-4.

not to contest the previous expropriation of its property. The Bavarian government was to provide clerical pensions, and the clergy in turn were required to swear an oath of loyalty to the monarch.)

The French would also show an even greater interest in the collection of economic and statistical data on the satellites, as an 1810 circular makes clear.

The Circular

In June 1810, an important request was sent to France's ambassadors across Europe.⁴⁷ In addition to the usual encouragement to promote French commercial and agricultural exports, they were asked to answer questions about the economy of the country to which they were posted, and the prospects for French goods being sold there. The circular was undoubtedly connected to the promulgation of the Trianon decree in April 1810, which created a licensing system allowing neutral ships to use French ports.

The questions of the circular included: "What kind and quantity of French manufactures are imported?," "What hindrances are there to our manufactures?," and "What is the price of colonial goods?" The ambassadors were further instructed "to send frequent reports about our commercial interests, taking care to present only facts from reliable sources."

The circular aimed at readying the ground for the further expansion of French trade. The intent was to discover what barriers had been put up against French products, so that they could be removed through new commercial treaties. In addition, the information was to be used to make the new licensing system that was part of the Continental System more effective. As one

⁴⁷ "Circular sent to M. Narbonne, Minister Plenipotentiary to Munich." June 23, 1810. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 14, fol. 254-5.

Napoleonic official noted: “it is through knowledge of facts that governments find appropriate remedies.”⁴⁸

In a more general sense, the circular suggests the emergence of what Jeremy Black in a different context called an information society.⁴⁹ Ever since the Scientific Revolution, governments had become more concerned with gathering statistics about various topics, from population to geography.⁵⁰ Diplomats were often instructed to obtain local maps, including those useful for military planning. In a world that was making the transition to a modern capitalist economy, the interest of the French Foreign Ministry in data related to trade is not surprising.

The gathering of such information became an obsession with the officials of the Empire as the years progressed, since it “was regarded as forming an essential prerequisite to effective administration.”⁵¹ It was also the prerequisite for the most thoroughgoing control. The circular was then far more than an element in the normal diplomatic function of information gathering. It lay the foundation for even greater extractions and impositions. It represented one of the more sinister aspects of the empire, one in which all of Napoleon’s diplomats were willing accomplices.

⁴⁸ C.J. Bonnin. *Principes d'administration publique*, 3 Vols., Third Edition. (Paris: Renaudière, 1812), Vol. I, 167.

⁴⁹ Jeremy Black. *British Diplomats and Diplomacy, 1688-1800*. (Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press, 2001), 118-45.

⁵⁰ In August 1810, Napoleon told Champagny to have all of his ambassadors provide a state of the military forces of the country to which they were posted. Napoleon [St. Cloud] to Champagny. August 2, 1810, no. 16745, in *Correspondance* Vol. 21, 3.

⁵¹ Woolf, 87.

Propaganda

Public opinion had become a matter of some importance in eighteenth-century Europe, but the spread of democratic practice (and democratic rhetoric) made it a vital concern for governments. Napoleon, as a product of the Revolution, understood this very well. Propaganda was a powerful means to further his ambitions not only within France, but throughout Europe.⁵² It therefore became another constant and central preoccupation of Napoleon's Foreign Ministry. Propaganda flowed coherently and relentlessly from it. By sticking to one version of events, French diplomats across Europe could be more effective in spreading a consistent French point of view. Otto, as part of this vast propaganda machine, worked to influence public opinion in Bavaria and the rest of Germany.

His embassy provides a glimpse into how propaganda was created and disseminated. Following his victories at Jena and Auerstadt, Napoleon had been anxious that the news was sent with the greatest speed to his ambassadors in order for them to be the first to influence public opinion.⁵³ At other times, propaganda could also emanate from the Foreign Ministry itself, as well as from individual ambassadors. Thus, in August 1805, Napoleon ordered Talleyrand to

⁵² Napoleonic propaganda has been the subject of a number of works. The most relevant are: Robert Holtman, *Napoleonic Propaganda* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950); François Monnier, "Propagande," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 586-92; André Cabanis, *La presse sous le Consulat et l'Empire, 1799-1814* (Paris: Société des études robespierristes, 1976); and Wayne Hanley, *The Genesis of Napoleonic Propaganda* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

⁵³ See Napoleon [Iéna] to Berthier. October 15, 1806, no. 13268, in *Correspondance généralé* Vol. 6, 1004; and Napoleon [Berlin] to Clarke. November 10, 1806, no. 13538, in *Correspondance généralé* Vol. 6, 1131-2; Otto to Talleyrand. October 29, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 337-9. Henri Jacques Guillaume Clarke served as France's War Minister between 1807 and 1814.

have one of Otto's dispatches reprinted in the Hamburg newspaper, *The Bee of the North*.⁵⁴

The intervention in Spain was an issue about which Napoleon was particularly sensitive. Champagny was very careful about the instructions he gave Otto.⁵⁵ The ambassador was to let it be known that France had acted to remove the Bourbon dynasty as part of its war with England, and that no state could be allowed to remain neutral in that struggle. The Spanish Bourbons were to be portrayed as plotting to betray France.⁵⁶ This argument was not entirely successful. Otto found sympathy for the Spanish rebels in Franconia and discovered that some Germans even hoped to emulate the Spanish *guerrilleros*.⁵⁷

The French government also went to great lengths to suppress enemy propaganda. In 1806, for example, when preparations for war against Prussia began, Napoleon became increasingly concerned over anti-French agitation that might lead to a revolt behind his armies as they moved on Berlin. Nuremberg, newly acquired by Bavaria, had become a major source of anti-French pamphlets and newspapers. The emperor then warned its residents he knew that "all the libels spread in Germany came from the city of Nuremberg; let its Senate know that if they do not arrest the book sellers and burn their pamphlets, before leaving Germany I shall punish Nuremberg in an exemplary manner."⁵⁸ When the city still did not comply, Napoleon had anti-

⁵⁴ Napoleon [Pont-de-Briques] to Talleyrand. Thermidor An XIII, (August 3, 1805), no. 10492, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 5, 529. A month later, Talleyrand was told to use Otto's dispatches to put together an article for the empire's official journals. Napoleon [Strasbourg] to Talleyrand. 5 Vendémiaire an XIV, (September 27, 1805), no. 10882, in *Correspondance générale*, Vol. 5, 740.

⁵⁵ Champagny [Bayonne] to Otto. May 18, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13. fol. 106-7.

⁵⁶ Champagny [Bayonne] to Otto. June 25, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13. fol. 123-32.

⁵⁷ Otto to Champagny. September 14, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 253.

⁵⁸ Napoleon [St. Cloud] to Talleyrand. August 5, 1806. AAE. M+D France 1777, fol. 84.

French pamphlets publicly burned and threatened six German publishers with execution, although only one Nuremberg bookseller, Johann Philipp Palm, was actually executed. His death only made him a martyr in the eyes of German nationalists.⁵⁹ As for the effect in Bavaria, Otto only noted that the news had been received calmly in Munich.⁶⁰ Similarly, after the Munich Gazette had published a false report of a French defeat at the Battle of Eylau in January 1807, Otto had the Bavarian government place all the kingdom's newspapers under police surveillance.

Otto had good reason to worry about anti-French propaganda in the German states. Despite the triumph of French military power in 1805 - 1806, he remained suspicious about resistance by the old elites, and was always ready to insist on more censorship: "In all the countries where privileged castes exist, the French system can only inspire hatred and a desire for revenge. His Majesty can no longer afford to be generous."⁶¹ He was convinced that those forces in Germany opposed to the ideas of the revolution (and ultimately of the Enlightenment) would remain hostile to the end. The ambassador was particularly concerned about the loyalty of many satellite diplomats, many of whom had not yet accepted the new order.⁶² He suggested these be replaced.

Otto was further disquieted by the arrest of one Adolphe Bush, a self-professed Prussian patriot, caught spying in Munich. Having personally interrogated him, the ambassador came

⁵⁹ Many historians believe the other five were chosen because they had already fled Nuremberg, and that Napoleon intended only to make a single example. It was a mistake. As Montgelas would later observe, "The pens of most [German] writers were from then on turned against France." See Jean Tulard, "Palm (Jean-Philippe)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 462.

⁶⁰ Otto to Talleyrand, no. 72. September 11, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 307-8.

⁶¹ Otto to Talleyrand. November 17, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 360.

⁶² Otto to Talleyrand. November 18, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 362-5.

away with the impression of a dangerous zealot.⁶³ Otto had already made a reference to emerging Bavarian nationalism some months earlier, noting:

If the Bavarians do not oppose us as part of the larger German nation, it is only because for a long time they have been a separate country, exposed to the insults of our common enemies and linked to France by the desire for self-preservation.⁶⁴

Propaganda became a higher priority still with a new war against Austria in 1809.

Despite Otto's efforts, Austrian propaganda entered Bavaria, causing him to insist on the closing of two pro-Austrian gazettes in Bamberg and Nuremberg.⁶⁵ In order to deal with similar cases in the future, he also demanded Munich create a new system of censorship, whereby a "councilor of instruction" would review all newspapers before being printed. In the future, all news bulletins were also to come either from France or other states of the Confederation of the Rhine, thereby eliminating reports from Austria or Prussia. Once actual hostilities began, Otto was told to take note of any "lies" the Austrians circulated so that they could be directly addressed.⁶⁶ Otto also

⁶³ Otto reported Bush was "...profoundly affected by the abasement of his nation, he wanted to raise it up even at the expense of his life... He declares that he did not act through self-interest, but by a powerful and irresistible sentiment of patriotism." Otto to Talleyrand. January 26, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément, Vol. 13, fol. 11. It is clear from Otto's correspondence that Bush (sometimes he was referred to as "Busch") also considered himself a Prussian patriot, not a German nationalist.

⁶⁴ Otto to Talleyrand. November 10, 1806. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 182, fol. 354. The Bavarian government under Max Joseph's grandson, Maximilian II (r. 1848-1864), would attempt to foster a "Bavarian national feeling" to "compete successfully with pan-German nationalism." Abigail Green. *Fatherlands: state-building and nationhood in nineteenth-century Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 268, 295.

⁶⁵ Otto to Champagny. January 31, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 44-6.

⁶⁶ Champagny to Otto. April 25, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 14, fol. 65.

complained about the ease with which Bavarian newspapers accepted rumors as truth.⁶⁷ At the same time, he received instructions to insert articles directly dictated by the Foreign Ministry into the *Munich Gazette*.⁶⁸

As one might expect, the propaganda war only intensified once the war began. The Austrians tried hard to provoke an uprising against the French.⁶⁹ Among the rumors spread was that Max Joseph and Montgelas had renounced the sacraments.⁷⁰ Otto as a result suggested there was a greater need for the Foreign Ministry to coordinate propaganda throughout Germany to better respond to Austrian lies.⁷¹ This was soon transformed into an increasing effort by the Ministry to direct the official media of all the satellites, something that would also affect Spain.

Aside from his dispatches and recommendations, Otto did make a signal contribution to the French propaganda effort. Since Napoleonic propaganda was confined almost entirely to publishing, printing technology had become of special interest the Foreign Ministry. In the last days of his embassy, two men had told Otto about the new printing method of lithography.⁷² He at once suggested that a lithography office be established in Paris for the mass printing of

⁶⁷ Otto to Montgelas. [no date] AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 14, fol. 141.

⁶⁸ Champagny to Otto, no. 11. January 26, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13. fol. 181.

⁶⁹ For Austrian propaganda during the 1809 campaign, see Helmut Hammer. *Oesterreichs Propaganda zum Feldzug 1809: eine Beitrag zur Geschichte der politischen* (München: Zeitungswissenschaftliche Vereinigung, 1935).

⁷⁰ Otto to Champagny. July 21, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 399-400.

⁷¹ Otto to Champagny. June 18, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 324.

⁷² Lithography uses engraved or etched stones and plates. The depressions collect ink that produce an image when applied to paper. The method had been invented by a Bohemian printer in 1796, and was therefore still an innovation in printing during the Napoleonic era. Bavaria would become a center for lithography by the early 1800s. Otto to Champagny. December 17, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 185, fol. 506-7; Dunan, 161-2.

propaganda pamphlets. Champagny endorsed the recommendation, minuting France's Interior Minister that it would only cost 20,000 francs to transport the men and their equipment to France.⁷³ With the adopting of new technology as well as new techniques, Otto and the Foreign Ministry were, in this regard too, in the forefront of modern propaganda. More generally, his production as well as dissemination of propaganda, in addition to his monitoring its effects across Germany, demonstrated the importance of his role in this vital aspect of imperial rule.

The Bavarian Constitution and the Code Napoleon

If spreading a French model of reform had been a goal of the empire, the introduction of the Code Napoleon should have been one of its chief aims, since it embodied the reforms of both the Consulate and the Revolution: equality before the law, freedom of religion, protection of property, and the abolition of manorial rights.⁷⁴ For this reason, French diplomats were sometimes instructed to encourage France's allies to accept it. In Bavaria its promotion did not go beyond some minor efforts to "encourage" its incorporation into the constitution the government was preparing.

Otto's first reference to the Code was in January 1807, when he reported plans for the new constitution.⁷⁵ Towards the end of the year, he was told by Champagny that:

You do not have to make any formal communication on this subject to the

⁷³ Champagny to the Comte de Montalivet [Minister of the Interior]. January 5, 1810. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 186, fol. 5. I was unable to find any additional reference about the creation of a lithography office.

⁷⁴ For an analysis of the different aspects of the Code Napoleon, see Jean Imbert, "Code civil"; Marie José Tulard, "Code de commerce"; Marie José Tulard, "Code d'instruction criminelle"; André Damien, "Code pénal"; and Marie José Tulard, "Code de procédure civile (1806)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 449-56.

⁷⁵ Otto to Talleyrand. August 11, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, 203-5.

Bavarian government. You are to confine yourself instead to suggestions, and you are to avoid leaving any impression of an official request. Do not take any further steps before you receive new instructions.⁷⁶

Champagny's letter suggests that the Code was not an important priority for the Ministry. If the Bavarians wished to adopt parts of it on their own, that would please Napoleon, but Otto was not obliged to exert any great pressure for them to do so.

More generally, both Otto and his ministry regarded the constitution as another step towards patterning Bavaria on the French model. (So did some Bavarians.) As Otto put it:

The entire Bavarian administration is convinced that their kingdom, which is so closely united to France by the most sacred political ties, must assimilate all its institutions with ours; ...all the elements of government... will be introduced step by step into this country, which will profit from our experience without undergoing the shocks that preceded the glorious reign of H[is] M[ajesty] the Emperor.⁷⁷

As for the Code Napoleon, Otto expressed confidence that it would be incorporated in some later version of the constitution.

Of course, there were some shadows. Otto knew (and Montgelas concurred) that most of the nobility continued to long for their old privileges. Many hoped an Austrian victory would restore manorial rights.⁷⁸ Even some elements of the Bavarian middle classes opposed the constitution, some out of nostalgia, and others out of fear that by strengthening the central government and reducing the power of intermediary corporations who might resist it, the kingdom would be exploited more efficiently by its own government for the benefit of France.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Champagny [Fontainbleu] to Otto. November 2, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Supplément Vol. 13, fol. 65-6.

⁷⁷ Otto to Champagny. May 4, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 184, fol. 98, cited in Woolf, 117-8.

⁷⁸ Otto to Champagny. January 15, 1809. AAE. CP Bavière. Vol. 185, fol. 17.

⁷⁹ Otto to Chamapngny. May 16, 1808. AAE. CP Bavière. Vol. 184, fol. 102.

Still, Otto remained optimistic:

Bavaria has followed afar and with measured step [changes] first achieved in France. In the space of twelve years it has made monks and nuns disappear, and purged the country of superstitions; it has rendered majesty to [civil] authority without stripping the nobility of its traditional splendor, while at the same time guaranteeing the rights of the populace. All these changes were made calmly and with moderation. The country need only go a little further to organize a uniform system of national representation, and to organize its diverse provinces into departments. The most intelligent men of the government are presently occupied with this work.⁸⁰

What is so striking is that none of this was directly imposed by the French. What is equally remarkable was how these great changes were achieved so quickly by subtler means. Local reformers, aided by the friendship of the French ambassador, and by a French military presence that was only occasionally overt but always felt, was enough to bring this about. If the 1810 Circular suggests a determination to systematize the exploitation of the Confederation, Otto's support of Montgelas and other reformers allowed the introduction of reforms that, at no great expense to Paris, won willing friends for France.

The End of Otto's Ministry

With the conclusion of peace between France and Austria in 1810, Napoleon sought to replace ambassador Andreossy, who had failed to warn the emperor of Austria's war plans, with Otto.⁸¹ Otto would continue to serve with distinction until March 1813, when he was recalled to Paris. Bavaria would continue to serve as Napoleon's dutiful ally, suffering through the dual burdens of the Continental System and the Russian campaign. In addition, the 1810 Trianon tariffs (a blanket fifty percent duty on most imports entering France) hurt Bavaria's foreign trade.

⁸⁰ Otto to Talleyrand. June 18, 1807. AAE. CP Bavière Vol. 183, fol. 165.

⁸¹ It was Andreossy who had previously replaced Otto as France's ambassador to London in 1802.

By 1811, exports had fallen by one-third from their peak two years earlier. The following year, they dropped even more, to seven percent. Imports declined as well, as Bavarian customs officials were forced to destroy all colonial goods that entered the country, even when they were of genuine American origin (and so theoretically permitted).⁸² The decline of the Bavarian economy caused great distress. As a result, more Bavarians took to smuggling.

On the political level, Napoleon's marriage in 1810 to the Archduchess Marie Louise created fear among France's German satellites that a new Franco-Austrian alliance might deprive them of the territories gained during the past decade.⁸³ This was put to rest for Bavaria when, during the months Montgelas spent in Paris (between January and June 1810), he was assured by Napoleon that his German allies would be protected.⁸⁴

Things only really began to go badly for the alliance in 1812, when twenty-two thousand Bavarian soldiers, or eighty-eight percent of those sent to Russia, were lost.⁸⁵ By 1813, although still outwardly loyal, Munich had already begun secret negotiations with Austria. It agreed to switch sides in exchange for a promise to protect most of its territorial gains, with the additional assurance that Max Joseph was to remain king. The kingdom then defected just before Leipzig. While its army's erstwhile attempt to block Napoleon's retreat at Hanau led to further losses at the hands of the Imperial Guard, it was still strong enough to participate in the subsequent invasion of France.

Montgelas was able to continue to serve as First Minister until 1817. His memoirs,

⁸² Dufraisse, "Bavière," *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 182-3; Dufraisse, "Blocus Continental," I, 249, 251.

⁸³ Kerautret, "1810: un tournant pour l'Allemagne," 270-3; Dunan, 268-70.

⁸⁴ Kerautret, "1810: un tournant pour l'Allemagne," 264-5.

⁸⁵ Jean Sarramon, "Alliés (contingents)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 71. Only 1,000 Bavarian prisoners would survive Russian prison camps to return home at the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

written after that date, were in large part a plea not to reverse the reforms he had helped author. He also expressed great pride in the new Bavaria he had helped create, and the fact that the kingdom had been strengthened through the Napoleonic era, when it might easily have been destroyed. As for Max Joseph, he continued to rule Bavaria until his death in 1825. His descendants remained kings until overthrown in the 1918 revolutions.

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn about the period of Otto's ambassadorship in Bavaria. First, Napoleon did not attempt to impose French reforms and institutions except as they affected the army. It was only here that he set down a specific organizational plan, with instructions for Otto to oversee its adoption. The emperor was equally determined to extract as much money as possible. The elimination of intermediary social bodies between the central government and its citizens made taxation more efficient. Much of the money collected went to Paris. Even mediatization, by creating a larger and wealthier state, also ultimately helped enrich France. But mediatization, like most other reforms, served an additional purpose. By redrawing German borders for Bavaria's benefit, Otto was also able to win the loyalty of Max Joseph and Montgelas. They would certainly have done more to resist Napoleonic imperialism if they had not been benefited so greatly from the dramatic expansion of state power, and national boundaries. Because of this support, France received many ancillary benefits at little cost. Otto was one of the key few responsible for this.

Otherwise, the French did little to interfere with the kingdom's domestic politics. Even when it came to the Code Napoleon, Otto's instructions were limited to persuading the Bavarians to adopt portions of it. Otherwise, the mere French presence was enough to prevent either

Austria or the kingdom's own nobility and Church hierarchy from stopping it. For Bavaria's reformers that was sufficient.

Although Montgelas claimed that Consular France served as the model for Bavaria's reforms, his original reform program had in fact been conceived as early as 1795, and was therefore part of a longer autocratic centralizing tradition. It was because of this that the Bavarian government was prepared for more sweeping reforms during the Napoleonic period. The kingdom's social and political evolution had in addition produced a substantial minority for whom reforms, such as the elimination of internal tariffs and manorial dues, provided a much appreciated economic benefit. It is not surprising, then, that in contrast to the Kingdom of Westphalia, where the imposition of an explicit French reform model was reversed after 1814, most of the Bavarian reforms survived.⁸⁶ They at least could not be criticized as a foreign imposition.

Thus, while many historians have seen the Empire as imposing drastic internal reforms following the model of the French revolution on the satellites in order to secure cooperation without the trouble of a full blown occupation, this is not what happened in Bavaria. There reforms developed organically. They may have been less sweeping than the first minister might have wanted, but they were both important and durable, and proceeded far more rapidly than otherwise might have been possible because of Otto's implicit support.

It is in these domestic reforms that Max Joseph, like Montgelas, appeared at his best. Cowardly and indecisive in foreign affairs, he was resolute in support of his First Minister's grand project, even if the reason for this resolve came, at least in part, from the French presence. This gave him the courage to defy those still powerful local interests opposed to all change.

⁸⁶ Dunan, 374-5.

Otto's own views about the imperial system were complex. His correspondence is sometimes ambiguous, and he undoubtedly practiced self-censorship on many occasions. Perhaps in part because of his German background, Otto showed occasional sympathy for the Bavarian people and government. It was certainly evident in his efforts to convince the Ministry and Napoleon to provide the Bavarians with a subsidy to ameliorate their financial troubles. (This might have also been due in part because he was simply more adept at manipulation than Napoleon, with his abrupt military manner, was.) Still, while he certainly supported the French Empire's exploitative aims, he showed himself to be far more than just a simple agent of French imperialism. When he felt French actions or conduct were wrong, he sought redress for the Bavarians. Otto's willingness to stand against the worst excesses of exploitation won him the respect of Bavarian leaders, perhaps even convincing them that the financial pressures of the empire might be reduced in the future.

He was equally willing to take a more compromising position in diplomatic negotiations than Paris demanded. The greater degree of collaboration that followed was almost certainly worth more than any amount of money or soldiers that could have been extracted. It might not have been rational for Bavaria to break with the empire before it did, but there are many moments in history when irrational decisions were made by rulers like Max Joseph. It is here that Otto, by convincing his Bavarian collaborators that exploitation was a burden they had to bear, and maintaining them in a subordinate position until 1813, made his greatest contribution. A true proconsul, his greatest achievement was his ability to direct the attention of Montgelas and Max Joseph away from French demands and towards the benefits Bavaria had received, while at the same time holding out the promise of an end to their burdens once Europe was again at peace.

With Otto, the Foreign Ministry had one of its best in Munich. Napoleon was at his most disingenuous when, in exile on Saint Helena, he claimed he had wanted a European empire of autonomous states that would have worked for the prosperity of all.⁸⁷ Bavaria's surrender to Napoleon's many demands, as well as its acceptance of a subordinate position in the new order, was eased not by his own persuasiveness, of which there was little evidence at the time, but by that of his chief representative. By the time he left Bavaria, Otto could look back on a long series of other accomplishments. These, in addition to the 1805 alliance, included the 1806 border negotiations, the Italo-Bavarian commercial agreement, and, of course, the contribution of thousands of soldiers who fought for the French Empire between 1805 and 1813.

If Bavaria can be regarded as one of the empire's greatest successes, Spain was one of its greatest failures. Iberia presented a very different environment for French diplomacy, although the same exploitative aims were pursued. Contrasting Spain with Bavaria helps explain how a pre-Napoleonic environment could make reform extremely difficult, if not impossible. Did its drastically different environment produce different French methods, or did they remain the same? This is one of the important questions answered in Chapter Six.

⁸⁷ There he told his trio of memorialists (Gourgaud, Montholon and Las Casas) that a united, prosperous Europe had been his greatest wish, which had only been foiled by the selfishness of his enemies, especially England.

Part Three: The Spanish Embassy, 1808-1813

Chapter Six: The Comte de Laforest and the Napoleonic Invasion of Spain

Napoleon invaded Spain to put his brother Joseph on its throne. The second of our two ambassadors, the comte de Laforest, France's representative from 1808 to 1813, was obliged to deal with the aftermath. He had to operate in the middle of a civil war that also involved the armies of Britain and France. The attempt of Joseph's pro-French government to introduce substantive administrative and social reforms compounded his problems, as they generated intense opposition not only to the French invaders, but to their Spanish collaborators. The failure of the Bourbon dynasty to accomplish substantial domestic reforms during the eighteenth century, combined with the opposition of traditional elites strongly opposed to all change, created a climate that was bitterly hostile to any reformist policies. That the initiatives for these reforms seemed to come from a Bonapartist government only added to the intensity of the opposition.

This chapter explores how and why Napoleon chose to depose the Bourbon dynasty in 1808, and why events then got out of his control, resulting in the Peninsular War. To explain this, it is first necessary to examine the social, political, and economic nature of traditional Spain.

Spain's Society and Economy under the Bourbons

Spain had a population of roughly 10.5 million in 1797, although repeated epidemics and famines in the early part of the nineteenth century would later reduce this. The country also had a relatively small urban population (only ten percent in Castille, compared to almost twenty percent in Bavaria).¹

¹ John Lynch. *Bourbon Spain, 1700-1808* (Cambridge, MA: B. Blackwell, 1989), 197. The Kingdom of Castile included all of Spain's provinces save for Aragon, Biscaye, Guizpucoa, Malava, Catalonia, Navarre, Valencia, and the island of Majorca.

Spain also had a large number of nobles and clergy, most of whom were hostile to reform. (The country had 480,589 nobles in 1787, compared to 400,000 in France,² and while France had a population two and a half times that of Spain, both countries had, prior to the Revolution, approximately 200,000 clergy.)³

There had also been a significant increase over the eighteenth century in the amount of entailed land. This was due to the practice of *mayorazgo*, by which even a commoner could bequeath lands to his heirs in perpetuity. Future acquisitions added by marriage or purchase could also be entailed.⁴ An owner could then buy a title from the crown, becoming a *hidalgo*, or member of the lesser nobility. In contrast to the French nobility, Spanish *hidalgos* enjoyed only a limited number of privileges: they did not have to quarter soldiers, could not be arrested for debt, and were to be addressed as “Don.”⁵ Most of them rented their lands to peasant farmers, or sublet them to tenants. Renters, who generally held only short-term leases, had little incentive to improve the soil, or invest in new farming technology, while most rents were spent on conspicuous consumption.⁶ The resulting lack of investment in agriculture was a serious

² Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 95-6. Georges Lefebvre cites a figure of 400,000 French nobles for the period just before the revolution. Georges Lefebvre *The Coming of the French Revolution*. translated by R.R. Palmer. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 7. Although the Spanish census of 1797 reported 403,000 nobles, those figures cannot be compared with the earlier count, since the 1797 census’ definition of a noble was more restrictive, and probably therefore missed a significant number of *hidalgos*.

³ According to Richard Herr, these included in 1788 - 68,000 monks and 33,000 nuns (housed in more than 2,000 monasteries and 1,000 nunneries), and 88,000 secular clergy, with several thousand individuals in other religious occupations. Richard Herr. *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), 29-30.

⁴ Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 91, 95.

⁵ Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 97.

⁶ This was not true in the provinces of Navarre and Aragon, where almost fifty percent of farmers owned

problem.⁷ Historians have blamed the overall organization of Spanish agriculture for having created a landowning class that was resistant to all political as well as economic reform. This opinion was also widespread in the early nineteenth century.⁸

Gabriel Tortella Casares' major study of the Spanish economy in the nineteenth century in particular emphasizes the agricultural inefficiency of the period and the slow increase in productivity.⁹ Conditions in the countryside were made even worse by the frequency with which landowners raised rents, sometimes beyond the ability of the peasants to pay. The result was that most lived at a subsistence level.¹⁰ Agricultural progress, when it did exist, was only on Spain's peripheries. The province of Galicia was relatively advanced, while in Catalonia, merchant investment in land encouraged the growth of a vibrant viniculture, along with silk and olive oil production.¹¹ Cultivation of "new" crops like corn and potatoes was also encouraged, allowing

the lands they worked. In general, most day laborers were in the south, making up seventy-five percent of the agricultural population in the provinces of Cordoba, Seville, and Jaén. See the map in Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 92-3.

⁷ Gabriel Tortella Casares' economic history of Spain describes agriculture in the eighteenth century as suffering from "persistent underdevelopment." Gabriel Tortella Casares. *The Development of Modern Spain: An Economic History of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 50.

⁸ Although recent historians have devoted considerable attention to Spanish reforms in the eighteenth century, most of these were in fact introduced in Spain's colonial empire. See for example Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein. *Edge of Crisis: War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789-1808* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); *Apogee of Empire: Spain and New Spain in the Age of Charles III, 1759-1789* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); and Gabriel B. Paquette. *Enlightenment, Governance and Reform in Spain and its Empire, 1759-1808* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

⁹ "Table 3.3: Estimated agricultural production, averages for decades, 1800-1899," in Tortella Casares, 62.

¹⁰ Lynch, 201-2, 409, 411.

¹¹ Noel, 121-2; Vives, 512-3. Government investment in these emerging industries was also important.

previously marginal lands to be reclaimed and cultivated.

There were some serious attempts to reform agriculture. In 1765, Pedro Rodríguez de Campomanes, a member of the Council of Castile, had argued for the right of enclosure for villages, as well as restrictions on land purchases by the Church.¹² His efforts were without effect. Thirty years later, Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos drew up a similar reform plan; again, nothing was done.¹³ He had also recommended that the Inquisition be stripped of its power to ban books or try heretics.¹⁴ Church, nobles and landowners together had prevented it. As John Lynch observes, “productivity was blocked not only by traditional farming practices, but above all by the existing agrarian structure which concentrated property and power in the hands of landlords preoccupied with profits, not improvements, while leaving the actual farmer without [either] security or incentives. Agrarian reform meant nothing without redistribution of rural property, and that would have involved confrontation with the privileged estates.”¹⁵

There was also almost no middle class in Spain, either in the countryside, or the towns. John Lynch has found only bourgeois precursors, “an amorphous collection [of] merchants... parish priests, officials, small farmers, and members of the liberal professions, middle class [only] in the sense that they belonged neither to the landed elite nor to the landless peasantry...”¹⁶ This group was concentrated in Catalonia and the Basque provinces, though by

See J. Clayburn La Force, “Royal Textile Factories in Spain, 1700-1800,” *The Journal of Economic History* Vol. 24, No. 3 (September 1964): 337-63.

¹² Lynch, 208-14. Most historians consider enclosure a pre-requisite for the development of modern farming.

¹³ Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 443.

¹⁴ Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 414-6.

¹⁵ Lynch, 214.

¹⁶ Lynch, 234.

the late eighteenth century it was also spreading to other major cities, like Madrid and Cadiz.¹⁷

The reduced size of the middle classes was in part due to a wealthy and powerful network of French merchants in the country. According to Michel Zylberberg: “[they also] refused to invest in rural industries. This contributed to economic stagnation.”¹⁸ Thus, not only did their domination of Spain’s export economy made it difficult for a Spanish commercial middle class (who might otherwise have supported reform) to emerge, they also slowed domestic manufacturing. Because they profited from an underdeveloped Spanish economy that continued to provide France with raw materials for manufacture and re-export, these French merchants and bankers used their presence in the economy to keep Spain in a subordinate (one might even say semi-colonial¹⁹) position. Even their brief expulsion during the War of the Convention did not weaken their long term position.²⁰

The unintegrated regional economies also contributed to national weakness.²¹ Historian

¹⁷ Michel Zylberberg. *Une si douce domination. Les milieu d'affaires français et l'Espagne vers 1780-1808* (Paris: Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 1993), 70-1. More than twenty-one percent of the merchants in Cadiz between 1748 and 1778 were Basque; another four percent were Catalans.

¹⁸ Twenty-five percent of all foreign merchants in Spain in 1797 were still French. See Zylberberg, 477 and 546.

¹⁹ As Michel Zylberberg notes, French merchants sought through the eighteenth century to use Spain as a source of raw materials that French industries would transform into finished goods to be sold again in Spain. This of course is the classic definition of a colonial economic relationship, and Napoleonic France had essentially forced Spain to submit itself to such an unequal economic status by 1808.

²⁰ See “Chapter XVI: Une Emancipation Avortée,” in Zylberberg, 441-67.

²¹ Ringrose describes four separate regional economies in Spain: a northeastern region centered on Catalonia, a southern region centered on Andalusia, a Castilian region centered on Madrid, and a northwestern region centered on the Basque provinces. David Ringrose. *Spain, Europe and the “Spanish Miracle,” 1700-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

David Ringrose contrasts the vibrant, expanding economy in Catalonia, with its booming textile industry, and the desperate poverty in Andalusia, where a daily wage was hardly enough to buy bread, in emphasizing the inability of the wealthier regions to improve the economic life of the poorer.²² Casares also points to a “failed” industrial revolution unable to expand beyond Catalonia, causing the country to fall significantly behind the rest of Western Europe.²³ Although there are important historical and linguistic reasons for Spain’s profound divisions, its disjointed economy also contributed significantly to the later inability of either the Madrid government or the Central Junta that attempted to coordinate resistance to the French to unite Spain in any political sense.²⁴

The most powerful secular force in Spain were the grandees (sometimes known as the *titulados*). There were 1,323 in 1797.²⁵ Their landholdings could be enormous. In Andalusia, just 563 landowners owned 13.5 percent of the land.²⁶ Nor surprisingly, many of them were extraordinarily wealthy. (The Duke of Arcos maintained a staff of 3,000 domestic servants on his various estates.)²⁷ Their influence on Spain’s society and economy was very great, and almost

²² Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein. *Apogee of Empire: Spain and New Spain in the age of Charles III, 1759-1789* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 207; Lynch, 221-5, 237, 244; See also the map in Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 132.

²³ Casares, 73-5.

²⁴ The Supreme Central Junta of Spain and the Indies was established at Aranjuez in September 1808 in order to coordinate the war efforts of the regional juntas. In January 1810 it was dissolved and replaced by a Regency Council, which attempted to govern all of Spain’s territory that was not under French occupation until Ferdinand’s return in 1813.

²⁵ Lynch, 226.

²⁶ Lynch, 204.

²⁷ Jean François Bourgoing. *Travels in Spain: Containing a Comprehensive View of the State of that Country down to the Year 1806*, 4 Vols. (London: 1808), Vol. I, 523, cited in Lynch, 200.

entirely regressive.

The other great conservative force in Spain was of course the Church. Its influence over the spiritual life of the nation was total. Its economic power was also enormous. Like the *grandees*, its influence was almost totally reactionary. The Church owned extensive tracts of land, amounting to one-twelfth of Spain's entire territory (even more than in Bavaria). In Castille for example it received one-eighth of the province's annual total income, while holding three-quarters of its mortgages.²⁸

Madrid created yet another great problem for the Spanish economy. Not only did it drain the provinces around it of valuable capital that could have been invested in new industries and agriculture, but its economy revolved around the consumption of luxury goods by small political and aristocratic elites that set a bad example for the nation.²⁹ Many of these wastrels drew their incomes from land far from the city. At the same time, a majority of Madrid's population lived at a subsistence level.³⁰

There were of course some elements of an absolutist, reformist tradition in Spain (as in Bavaria). Charles III's reign (1759-1788) in particular had seen the creation of several universities, as well as a successful reform of Spain's American empire.³¹

²⁸ Vives, 493-5, 509; Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire*, 33-4.

²⁹ Ringrose, *Madrid and the Spanish Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 87.

³⁰ Lynch, 242-4. The political, aristocratic, and clerical elites that made up just twenty-one percent of Madrid's population in the mid-eighteenth century enjoyed sixty-seven percent of its disposable income. Artisans and other workers (forty-six percent of the population) enjoyed only eleven percent of the city's disposable income. Ringrose, *Madrid and the Spanish Economy*, 72-4, 318.

³¹ Charles Petrie, Charles Noel, and Richard Herr adhere to the traditional view of Charles III as an enlightened despot, while John Lynch regards him as simply an absolutist with little concern for enlightened ideas. Lynch, 247-90; Sir Charles Petrie. *King Charles III of Spain: An Enlightened Despot* (London: Constable, 1971);

Still, the king's chief minister, the Marquis of Esquilache fared no better than any other reformer. Having tried to halt the entailment of Church and aristocratic estates, reform tax farming, and break Cadiz's monopoly of colonial trade, merchants, nobles and clergymen had as usual all turned against him.³² In 1766, they organized riots in Madrid that forced Charles to dismiss him.³³ Forty years later, a similar coalition, the "Conspiracy of Aranjuez" would bring down another royal minister, Manuel Godoy.³⁴

Nonetheless, some of Esquilache's reforms survived him. The most important was the reduction of the power of the established *colegios mayores* that had kept Spain's universities parochial institutions closed to new (and especially foreign) ideas.³⁵ New university curricula included scientific and technical subjects. This would later have great effect, since the universities trained the government's future officials who in turn would press for further reforms.

Charles C. Noel, "Charles III of Spain," in *Enlightened Absolutism*, edited by H.M. Scott, 119-43, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990); Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 232-5.

³² Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire*, 43-6, 48-80.

³³ Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire*, 81-98, 107-115. The immediate cause of the riots was a decree that the residents of Madrid adopt French dress (short capes and tricorne hats), with fines for those who continued to wear traditional dress. Evidence suggests that Esquilache's enemies encouraged him to issue the decree at a time when high food prices were already causing unrest in the capital.

³⁴ Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire*, 98-107.

³⁵ Noel, 133, 135-7; Richard L Kagan. *Students and Society in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979), 109-58. The *colegios mayores*, introduced in the sixteenth century, were located at Salamanca, Alcalá de Henares, San Ildefonso, Valladolid, Oviedo, and San Bartolomé. Originally created to provide financial support for poor university students, by the eighteenth century they had become "cliquish and exclusive clubs which offered easy comfort to their members for years, even decades, until fellow graduates, holding posts of authority, were able to provide them plum posts in government and church. It was a corrupt, widely-resented system which brought many undeserving, ill-prepared men to office, fostering the narrow careerism of an elite within the elite." Richard L. Kagan, *Students and Society*, 227.

The marquis hoped this might help reduce the role of the *grandees* in government through the appointment of newly educated *hidalgos* to important civil service posts, in a manner similar to the use of the *noblesse de robe* by the French Bourbons.³⁶

Charles III's greatest interest had been in tax reform. In a daring move, he had royal bureaucrats take charge of the collection of the *excusado*, the tax levied on the clergy. Its collection had historically been a problem, since the Church, having been allowed to assess itself, had engaged in systematic fraud. Charles' reform raised the amount collected six-fold by the end of the eighteenth century.³⁷

Some reformers wanted still more control of the Church. Inspired by French Gallicanism, "Regalists" like José Nicolás Azara, Spain's minister to Rome, was outspoken in his criticism of the Vatican, writing that "the arrogance, avarice and vices [of the Papacy] are intolerable in a century in which, by the grace of God, we are no longer as weak as before... the time has arrived for the king to liberate us from this tyranny."³⁸ He and those like him wanted the king to be able to appoint or approve the appointment of bishops, and at the same time harness the Church's wealth to revive the Spanish economy. To further this aim, they wanted to not only disentail church lands, but also end ecclesiastical immunity from royal justice.³⁹

Despite these reforms, Charles III failed to deal seriously with the most important questions facing Bourbon Spain: administrative, financial, agrarian reforms, and the continuing power of the landed elites and the Church. Fearful that any rapid change might lead to revolt, he

³⁶ Noel, 128. This use of *hidalgos* began with Philip V, the first Bourbon king.

³⁷ Noel, 131.

³⁸ Azara to Roda. August 11, 1768, cited in Paquette, 72-3.

³⁹ Paquette, 18-20, 70-8, 89-92.

had not been willing to take on such powerful opponents.⁴⁰ Still, historian Richard Herr praises him for putting qualified reformists into important administrative positions.⁴¹

Remarkably, many peasants were as hostile to reform as the privileged classes. Religious conservatives, they were determined to stop foreign and enlightened influences (the two being synonymous) from changing their country:

Since the Counter-Reformation it had become second nature for millions of Spaniards to feel that their Catholic country [was] confronted [by] a hostile outside world... Those who objected to the doctrines of the Enlightenment found a plea to preserve national... traditions both natural and logical. Conservatives... (easily) fell back on this ingrained xenophobia.⁴²

Ferment for reform nonetheless continued to grow in some corners of the kingdom. The Society of Friends of the Country, a group of bureaucrats from the expanding civil service, together with merchants, had first come together to discuss Montesquieu and Voltaire. They eventually began to lobby for reform. The significance here is that unlike previous initiatives that came from high government officials, this came from members of those groups that would later be the greatest supporters of French style reforms. Many of Bonapartist Spain's future collaborators, such as Francisco Cabarrús, Joseph's future Minister of Finance, belonged to such a group.⁴³ While keen to encourage the Bourbons to implement further reforms, their hopes would not be realized until Napoleon's invasion.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Noel, 125, 128-30.

⁴¹ Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 233. Herr regards Charles' sincere piety and frugality as having won the loyalty of his subjects, after an initial coolness when he came from Naples to take the throne in 1759.

⁴² Herr, *Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 228.

⁴³ Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 64, 68, 398. For a short biography of Cabarrús, see Appendix I.

⁴⁴ Herr, *The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 37-85.

It was becoming clear that only some cataclysm could bring about fundamental reform, for the conservative position had only hardened further with the coming of the French Revolution. Count Joseph Moñino de Floridablanca, Charles IV's first secretary, was especially frightened that revolutionary contagion might spread to Spain. His fears only increased with the outbreak of Barcelona bread riots in 1789 that seemed to him like the Parisian protests prior to the storming of the Bastille. To prevent the spread of revolutionary ideas, Floridablanca forbade any mention of the Revolution in newspapers or books, while Spain's ambassador to France was instructed to tell his countrymen living there to make no reference to events in letters to friends or relatives.

Of course, the government could not erect a permanent *cordon sanitaire* against ideas. Ironically, it was exiled French priests who spread them through their attacks on the Revolution. But these exiles also interacted with Spanish clergy to create powerful local anti-revolutionary sentiment. When Spain finally declared war on the French Republic in March 1793, (beginning a two-year "War of the Convention,") they made it briefly popular by claiming that in fighting the Revolution, Spaniards were defending the faith.⁴⁵

Napoleon Bonaparte, then a newly promoted *Général de Brigade* assigned to the Topographical Service of the War Ministry, noted the rise of this nascent Spanish national feeling. In a memo recommending that the French armies focus their efforts on Italy, General Bonaparte observed,

The slowness and ineptness of the court of Madrid, combined with the blindness of the people [leave Spain weak when it takes] the offensive. But the patient character of this nation, its pride and superstitions, which predominate, and the size of its population make it dangerous if it is pressed... No cooled-headed person can think of taking Madrid; the project is in any case not appropriate in our

⁴⁵ Herr, *Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 297-315.

current position.⁴⁶

One wonders whether the Emperor Napoleon ever recalled his own words after he became mired in the Peninsular War.

Spain's declaration proved unwise. It provoked a political and economic crisis that almost brought down the monarchy. The threat of invasion soon forced the government to introduce a limited form of conscription. By 1794, it was also faced with the problem of how to fund an increasingly expensive war. Desperate, it still could not raise taxes without alienating its subjects.⁴⁷ The government chose instead to print money, run a budgetary deficit, and borrow with a series of *vales reales*, or interest-bearing notes.⁴⁸ The *vales reales* had first been introduced by Francisco Cabarrús in 1781 to secure a loan of 100 million *reales* (or twenty-five

⁴⁶ "Note sur la position politique et militaire de nos armées de Piémont et d'Espagne, remise par Robespierre jeune, 1er Thermidor An II [July 19, 1794]," cited in Jean Colin. *L'Éducation Militaire de Napoléon* (Paris: Librairie Militaire R. Chapelot et Cie, 1900), 445. Although Augustin Robespierre was the official author, it is clear its real author was General Bonaparte. For a more detailed explanation of the authorship, see Colin, 294-6.

⁴⁷ A limited number of taxes were introduced, including one on rents. Another was on royal officials earning more than 8,000 *reales*. None were sufficient to cover war expenses. Herr, *Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 380-3, 390-2.

⁴⁸ The three issues of *vales* between 1794 and 1795 amounted to 967 million *reales*. These were at once both government bonds (providing four percent interest) and paper money. They depreciated in value through the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, losing sixty-three percent of their value by 1808. See Herr, *Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain*, 382; Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 278-9, 281, 284; and Lynch, 415. New issues continued through 1808. These will be discussed in detail in Chapter Seven. (Interestingly, the Papacy allowed the Spanish government in 1805 to disentail ecclesiastical lands equal to 6.4 million *reales* in revenues, in return for similar value in *vales reales*.) Vives, 521-2.

million livres tournois) from Parisian banks.⁴⁹ To get this, Madrid had had to promise to eventually pay six million pesos in Mexican silver, and also allow the dispatch of three French vessels to New Spain in order to buy colonial goods worth up to sixty million *reales*. Later *vales* were secured by promising creditors more Mexican silver, future tax revenues on tobacco and stamped paper, as well as a share of the Cadiz excise taxes. This was a dangerous exercise, since as John Lynch points out, the Spanish government had already fallen into a “condition of semi-permanent indebtedness [well] beyond its capacity to pay,” more than a decade before the French Revolution.⁵⁰ The creation of Spain’s first national bank, the *Banco de San Carlos*, in 1782 had only postponed the day when the Spanish government would have to deal with its decision to live beyond its means.⁵¹ The cost of the wars now raised the debt to almost catastrophic proportions. This enormous burden would reduce the ability of later governments to meet basic expenses or institute reforms.

Predictably, the Spanish economy soon succumbed to a sharp inflationary spiral that would continue through the early nineteenth century. Previously, expanding Spanish trade had helped alleviate such inflationary pressures, but the outbreak of war against Britain in 1796 prevented this. (Almost immediately, the British blockade caused yearly imports of silver to decline from 236 million *reales* in 1796 to only 12 million the following year;⁵² Cadiz began to

⁴⁹ During the Napoleonic era, the exchange rate was approximately four *reales* to one franc.

⁵⁰ Lynch, 327.

⁵¹ Lynch, 326-7. The initial bank investors included a large number of French merchants. This is not surprising, since Cabarrús, a Frenchman by birth, was its founder. Zylberberg, 283-311.

⁵² See “Table: Spain: Silver Imports on Government Account, 1793-1797,” endnote 68, in Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 538.

see losses in trade that by 1802 would amount to more than 2.7 billion *reales*.)⁵³ It was only after the 1802 Treaty of Amiens that Spain restored its connection with the Americas; by 1804 the colonies were again providing forty percent of crown revenues. But when a new British declaration of war cut Spain off again, economic disaster followed. The royal treasury was thereafter repeatedly forced to float more loans, and issue new *vales reales*, to avoid bankruptcy.⁵⁴ Stanley and Barbara Stein report that around half the *pesos* minted in Mexico between 1796 and 1810 had to be kept in New Spain. These 190 million *pesos fuertes* (equal to more than 1.5 billion *reales*) could have paid off one-third of Spain's entire debt (as of 1801).⁵⁵

Spain faced other problems as well. A yellow fever epidemic in 1800 was followed by cholera four years later. A poor harvest in 1803 - 4 fueled more inflation, forcing wheat prices up 350 percent in Old Castile and Extremadura. Landowners held their rents ever more tightly rather than investing in the economy. As a result, urban unemployment rose, while lands were left uncultivated. As Jovellanos asked in his diaries, "why are there so many hands [in our towns] without land, and in the country so much land without [laborers]? If one could only bring them all together, then all, people and land, would be better off."⁵⁶ Fear of revolution paralyzed

⁵³ Jaime Vicens Vives. *An Economic History of Spain*, translated by Frances M. Lope-Morillas. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969) , 580.

⁵⁴ Both Dutch banks and the Bank of France provided loans to the Spanish government after 1804. It was as a result of speculation by the banker Gabriel-Julien Ouvrard in Mexican silver that caused the Bank of France to suffer a crisis of confidence in late 1805. Michel Bruguère, "Ouvrard," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 442; Zylberberg, 517-43; and Bruguère, "Banque de France," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 163.

⁵⁵ The total Spanish government debt in 1801 was just over 4.1 billion *reales*. Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 163; "Table: Spain: Domestic and Foreign Debt, 1801," endnote 88, in Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 540.

⁵⁶ Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos. *Diarios, Obras* (Madrid: Biblioteca Autores Españoles, 1956), Vol. III, 291, cited in Lynch, 409.

Charles IV and Manuel Godoy, the king's new chief minister.⁵⁷ Even supporters of reform began to be nervous about popular unrest. As historian Charles Noel observed “[the reformers] feared the masses... Their reforms were fundamentally self-interested, designed to perpetuate elite control over a more vigorous monarchy and a more prosperous, but submissive, artisanry and peasantry.”⁵⁸ It was this nation, beset with an enormous economic crisis, massive popular discontent and government paralysis, that Napoleon decided to invade in 1808. In order to understand why, one must next turn to the events leading up to the French intervention.

Godoy and the Reasons for the Invasion of Spain

As already noted, Spain had fought a difficult war in the Pyrénées against the armies of revolutionary France. This ended with the Treaty of Basel in 1795, negotiated by Charles IV's chief minister, Don Manuel Godoy y Álvarez de Faria, the so-called “Prince of Peace.”⁵⁹ Spain then allied itself with France in 1796 and declared war on Britain.⁶⁰ This is ironic, since Godoy had replaced the Conde de Aranda as chief minister because the latter had been considered too pro-French.⁶¹ At the time of the treaty, it appeared that the French Republic would be victorious everywhere, and Godoy probably expected Spain to get some territory as a result of the new alliance. However, neither the Republic nor the empire ever bothered to properly compensate

⁵⁷ Lynch, 408-18.

⁵⁸ Noel, 143. A few reformers did believe that radical reforms were the only way for the Bourbons to survive the economic and political crises Spain suffered following the beginning of the Revolutionary wars. Cabarrús was the most prominent of these.

⁵⁹ Godoy was given the title of Prince of Peace for negotiating the Treaty of Basle with France in 1795.

⁶⁰ A good synopsis of Spain's foreign relations with France between 1789 and 1803 can be found in Schneid, *Napoleon's Conquest of Europe*, 11-36.

⁶¹ Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 41.

Spain for the loss of its colonies. This remained the most catastrophic result of the anti-British war. (The most that was achieved was the transfer of the Kingdom of Etruria to Charles IV's son-in-law, Louis de Bourbon, in compensation for the annexation of the duchy of Parma by the Republic. Yet even this was only temporary, since Napoleon would later give the kingdom to his sister Elisa.)

Charles IV had come to depend on Godoy as Max Joseph depended on Montgelas. Born on May 12, 1767, Manuel Godoy was the son of Don José de Godoy y Sánchez de los Ríos, a Colonel in the Extramaduran militia, and Doña Antonia de Faria, a Portuguese aristocrat.⁶² The Godoys had been of no great consideration until 1784, when José obtained a position for Manuel in the Royal Guard.

By 1788, Godoy had gained the attention of Charles IV and Maria Luisa. Within a year he had become their favorite. Rewards soon followed. Made a Lieutenant General at the age of twenty-four, he was soon named first minister, with the title of duke of Alcudia.⁶³ The king and queen showered him with money and expensive gifts. He was even allowed in 1797 to marry María Theresa de Borbon, the King's first cousin.⁶⁴ Godoy's incredible ascent fueled rumors of an intimate relationship with the Queen. These helped undermine the reputation of the Spanish

⁶² Godoy's noble ancestry could be traced to Don Pedro Muñiz de Godoy, who died at the battle of Valverde in 1387. Later in life, Godoy tried to claim that his ancestors had been in Spain since the time of the Visigoths, asserting that the family name was a contraction of "Godo soy" or "I am a Goth." Douglas Hilt. *The Troubled Trinity: Godoy and the Spanish Monarchs* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 22-3.

⁶³ The truth of Godoy's relationship with the Queen continues to be debated among historians. Douglas Hilt points out that there is no direct proof of an affair. He does not dismiss the possibility, but speculates that if there had been one, it must have been of short duration. Hilt, 25-31.

⁶⁴ Hilt, 68-9. A daughter, Carlotta, was born of the union, which was otherwise an unhappy one.

Bourbons just as rumors about Marie Antoinette hurt the French Bourbons.⁶⁵ Over time these rumors would also merge into a general dissatisfaction over Godoy's pro-French policies. They convinced many Spaniards that the king was the willing tool (and cuckold) of Godoy, who was betraying Spain to France.

Godoy's appointment had at first been welcomed by would be Spanish reformers. One of his first acts had been to call on them to send him written proposals for new projects.⁶⁶ However, the hostility this aroused among the factions of Charles's court convinced him to continue the gradualist approach followed by his predecessors in order "to placate ecclesiastical and commercial groups whose financing back was essential [for the government.]"⁶⁷

Napoleon had almost decided to invade Spain in 1801, when the Spanish agreed to join France in an invasion of Portugal. This had been done to close Portugal's ports to the British. The incompetence of Godoy and the Spanish army, which seemed to Napoleon proof of a conspiracy against him (since he could not imagine staff work that poor), almost convinced the First Consul for a second time to overthrow the Bourbons, especially after the Spanish had decided to forbid the entry of additional French troops into their country. It was Talleyrand who convinced Napoleon that an invasion would be a bad idea. Godoy was therefore let off with a warning. "If the Prince [of Peace], who has been bought by the English, drags the king and queen into [policies] contrary to the interests of the Republic, the last hours of the Spanish monarchy

⁶⁵ The negative image of Marie Antoinette created by the scandal sheets of *ancien régime* France is treated in Lynn Hunt. *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Sarah C. Maza. *Private lives and public affairs: the causes célèbres of prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); and the articles in Dena Goodman. *Marie-Antoinette: writings on the body of a queen* (New York : Routledge, 2003).

⁶⁶ Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 42.

⁶⁷ Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 51.

will [have arrived].”⁶⁸ Franco-Spanish relations deteriorated further when, by the Treaty of Amiens, the French gave the Spanish colony of Trinidad to Britain in order to avoid losing any colonies themselves. Napoleon also acquired the Louisiana territory that had been given to Spain by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Then, in direct violation of his promises, he sold it to the United States, which already had designs on Spanish Florida.

Many Spaniards held Godoy responsible for these losses. As a result, he tried desperately to keep Spain neutral when war resumed between France and England in 1803. This was made difficult by both belligerents. Napoleon insisted Godoy pay France a six million franc monthly subsidy.⁶⁹ This to the British made Spain France’s ally in all but name. Retaliation soon followed. The royal navy in October 1804 captured the Spanish treasure fleet from the Americas carrying the equivalent of two million English pounds.⁷⁰ Charles then declared war on Britain.

This would prove disastrous for Spain and its navy, which was soon forced to collaborate in Napoleon’s plans for an invasion of England. These ended with the battle of Trafalgar, when a joint Franco-Spanish fleet of thirty-three ships (fifteen of them Spanish) was caught near Cadiz by Admiral Horatio Nelson. By the end of the day, the British had captured or destroyed twenty-two without losing one of their own. Of the Spanish vessels, nine were lost, including the *Santísima Trinidad*, the largest warship in the world. Madrid soon began to fear it would lose all of its now defenseless colonies to England.

Already unpopular because of the naval debacle, Godoy’s fall was sealed when he

⁶⁸ Napoleon [Malmaison] to Talleyrand. 21 Messidor An IX (July 10, 1801), no. 6360, in *Correspondance Générale*, Vol. 3, 726.

⁶⁹ Schneid, *Napoleon’s Conquest of Europe*, 34. The subsidy was to be paid as long as France was at war with Britain.

⁷⁰ Schneid, *Napoleon’s Conquest of Europe*, 35.

prepared to support Prussia in its war against France. Still unwilling to confront Napoleon openly, he announced the mobilization of Spain's armies without explanation. Although he quickly reversed himself following the Prussian defeat, Godoy's intent had been unmistakable. It was not until the Treaty of Tilsit with Russia, however, that Napoleon was able to settle his unfinished business with Spain.

There were of course by this time other motives for French intervention: making the Continental System more effective, removing the last Bourbons from Europe, installing a Spanish government which would be more effective in supporting the war against England, pleasing French merchants who wanted to strengthen their position, placing another Bonaparte on a European throne, and perhaps, replacing France's lost colonies and overseas markets with those of Madrid.⁷¹

Napoleon began with a treaty obliging Godoy to allow the movement of 25,000 French infantry and 3,000 cavalry to the Portuguese border.⁷² He also proposed the division of Portugal, with the French receiving the central provinces, including Lisbon, and Godoy the southern, including Algarve and Alentejo. The first minister was so blinded by the prospect of becoming ruler of his own country that he did not recognize Napoleon's ruse for what it was.⁷³

Napoleon's plans to depose the Bourbons had been encouraged by several advisors, including François de Beauharnais, France's ambassador to Madrid.⁷⁴ Beauharnais was secretly

⁷¹ The French began in 1807 to gather detailed information on all Spain's colonies, even the Philippines. See "Memoir on the Isles of the Philippines." March 22, 1806. AAE. CP Espagne Supplément Vol. 20, fol. 12-24.

⁷² The Treaty was signed on October 27, 1807.

⁷³ Hilt, 176-8.

⁷⁴ François de Beauharnais was the brother of Josephine's first husband, the Vicomte Alexandre de Beauharnais. Alexandre had been executed during the Terror. François had served as deputy (representing Paris) in

in contact with Charles' disgruntled heir, Ferdinand, who had promised to be a dutiful French ally if the emperor supported a *coup* against his parents.⁷⁵ Ferdinand's letters convinced the emperor the Bourbons were so corrupt they could be easily eliminated.

Ferdinand was arrested on the orders of his father following the discovery of these letters.⁷⁶ According to Godoy, the minister had to talk the king and queen out of having him executed.⁷⁷ In the end, only Ferdinand's confederates were brought to trial. All evidence implicating the prince or the French government was suppressed. Stanley and Barbara Stein argue that Godoy was tricked into accusing Ferdinand of treason by aristocratic conspirators who knew a trial would only discredit the royal favorite because of the flimsiness of the evidence.⁷⁸

There were several consequences of this affair. First, Charles, Maria Louisa, and Godoy were seriously discredited in the eyes of the public, while the hopes of the reformers were placed in Ferdinand. (Wrongly, since once Ferdinand finally did become king, he opposed all reforms

the Estates General in 1789, but had fled France before the Terror began. Prior to his being sent to Spain, he had served between 1805 and 1806 as Napoleon's Minister to the Kingdom of Etruria, so he had experience dealing with Bourbon monarchs. "Beauharnais (François, marquis de)," in Henri-Robert, 105-7.

⁷⁵ Hilt, 170-3, 179-80. Ferdinand also requested that he be allowed to marry into the Bonaparte family. Ambassador Beauharnais suggested that his and Josephine's cousin, Marie-Stéphanie de la Pagerie, would make a suitable bride.

⁷⁶ Ferdinand was arrested on October 29, 1807. Historians refer to these events as "the Escorial Affair." Hilt, 190.

⁷⁷ Manuel Godoy. *Memorias*, 2 Vols. (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1956), Vol. II, 205-6. Godoy was trying to obtain a royal pardon from Ferdinand when he wrote this, so his claim that he prevented the prince's execution may have been an invention to curry royal favor.

⁷⁸ Since Ferdinand's co-conspirator, Secretary of Gracia y Justicia José Antonio Caballero, was a member of the tribunal conducting the trial, he could have influenced its outcome to place Godoy in a negative light. Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 470-3.

that did not increase his own power.) Second, the Spanish government became so focused on its internal problems it was less able to prevent an invasion. Third, Napoleon concluded that Spain's chaotic situation could only be restored by direct intervention. He was certain that the weakened and distracted country would quickly collapse.

The reasons behind Talleyrand's new interest in removing the Bourbons is less clear. As Foreign Minister, he had always hoped to recreate the family alliance France had enjoyed when Bourbons had sat on French and Spanish thrones. Historian Emile Dard suggests a different motive; namely, that Talleyrand convinced Napoleon to invade Spain in order to turn his attention away from Austria, which was then rearming, and which was also secretly paying him.⁷⁹ Since he had long been conspiring with Klemens von Metternich, Austria's ambassador to France, to undermine the emperor, this is plausible. Both feared that if Napoleon was not distracted, he might destroy Austria, thus permanently wrecking Europe's balance of power. It is difficult to know exactly how much the Spanish project was directed by Talleyrand. (He had the Foreign Ministry archives purged of much of his correspondence where he led the Provisional Government after Napoleon's first abdication.) There is however enough circumstantial evidence for most historians to believe he was one of its driving forces.

Napoleon expected a quick and easy victory. Even some Spaniards had come to believe that only the French could save them from the utter incompetence of the Bourbon regime. According to an internal French Foreign Ministry report of February 1808: "[The improvement] of Spain demands the influence of a Great Protector[, i.e., Napoleon]."⁸⁰ It went on to predict that as few as 70,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry would be needed to hold Spain's interior and

⁷⁹ Emile Dard. *Napoleon and Talleyrand* (London: Philip Allan & Co. Ltd., 1937), 145-63.

⁸⁰ "Memoir on Spain by M. La Grange." February 28, 1808. *Mémoires et Documents Espagne* [Henceforth cited as M+D Espagne] Vol. 153, fol. 302.

coasts (presumably to prevent any landing by the British) if helped with an additional 25,000-30,000 Spanish soldiers.

Economic motives for the invasion were also important. It was believed that Spain would yield enormous profits, and that French merchants would regain the advantages they enjoyed prior to the Revolution, when as Michel Zylberberg relates “the Hispanic world furnished French manufacturing with the key raw materials that it needed...” (Between 1775 and 1776 French goods had accounted for 11.5 percent of Spain’s foreign trade.)⁸¹ Despite severe reductions during the War of the Convention, trade with Spain had rebounded after 1795. (By 1801, more than seventy percent of France’s total trade was with the Iberian peninsula.)⁸²

Napoleon hoped that the disentailment of Church property alone would so stimulate the economy as to allow even more Franco-Spanish commerce. He was equally sanguine about the profits to be made from Spain’s vast colonial empire. Its possessions in Asia and the Americas were expected to provide markets and colonial goods to replace those lost to the British. Napoleon was certain Mexican silver could finance his military campaigns, while Cuban sugar would replace that lost in Haiti.⁸³ Napoleon even drew up plans to annex both Cuba and Peru.

⁸¹ Zylberberg, 545.

⁸² See “Table: Trade with Spain as % of Total Trade of France, 1801,” endnote 64, in Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 564. This curious peak was a reflection of the general reduction in France’s trade with the rest of Europe during the Revolutionary Wars. Zylberberg, 496.

⁸³ There were good reasons to expect this. Since Spain had entered into alliance with France in 1796, Mexican silver had been an important source of specie for France. (Almost 300 million francs in silver were sent to France in the decade after 1797.) Napoleon assumed the colonies would be loyal to whoever controlled the *metropole*, as they had after the earlier transfer of power from the Hapsburgs to the Bourbons. Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 376-7; “Entrées de piastres d’Espagne en France (Francs),” AN AF* 493, cited in Zylberberg, 498. Also see Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 318, 396-7.

Voluminous records indicate the decision to invade was taken only after an exhaustive examination of the economic situation.⁸⁴

The emperor was also convinced that since Spain's monarchy was so corrupt, the population would regard any replacement as an improvement. He believed the Spanish people to be indolent and of no account. Neither the British, nor the Spanish themselves, expected the army to put up much of a fight. Napoleon was so confident he assigned the invasion to new recruits, while keeping his best troops in Germany to threaten Austria and Prussia.

French preparations continued through 1807. In November, a French army under General Junot was sent to invade Portugal. Additional French troops then moved to seize important cities and fortresses under the pretext of supporting this invasion. By 1808, when the French in Spain already outnumbered the Spanish army, rumors began to circulate that Godoy and the king were planning to flee to the Americas or England.⁸⁵ Convinced that Napoleon would support him, Ferdinand staged a *coup* at Aranjuez on March 17, and members of the court paid a mob to march on the royal palace. Ferdinand was able at the same time to mobilize the aristocratic officer corps against Godoy, whom they hated as an upstart (and who had reduced the size of the Royal Guard by half).⁸⁶ While the frightened first minister was supposedly smuggled in a blanket to safety, a terrified Charles announced his abdication.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 674 contains documents and reports regarding preparations made by Napoleon for the removal of the Bourbons.

⁸⁵ These rumors seem to have been correct. Godoy had planned to move the royal family and court to Andalusia, where it would be easier to flee to the Americas if the French were to invade. It was only the uprising of Aranjuez that prevented their escape. Hilt, 204-7; Esdaile, *Napoleon's Wars*, 338; Colonel Nick Liscombe. *The Peninsular War Atlas* (Long Island City, NY: Osprey Publishing, 2010), 30.

⁸⁶ Esdaile, *Napoleon's Wars*, 339-40.

⁸⁷ Esdaile, *Napoleon's Wars*, 341-2; Ronald Fraser. *Napoleon's Cursed War: Spanish Popular Resistance*

The elites had shown themselves perfectly capable of bringing down the royal favorite to defend their privileges. Grandees dominated the revolt, while the clergy also played an important part. All pressed Ferdinand to revoke the decree permitting the sale of Church property, and to appoint several aristocrats to important positions in his new government. Still, the most important factor in the *coup*'s success was the loss of faith in Charles and Godoy among the Spanish people as a result of military defeats, in the continued subservience to France, and the ongoing economic crisis. Since Ferdinand had no discernible political program, each segment of society saw in him what they chose - either as a reformer, a defender of privilege, or simply an enemy of Godoy. While Ferdinand enjoyed public acclamation, he nervously awaited Napoleon's reaction.

Napoleon's brother-in-law, Marshal Joachim Murat, had coincidentally entered Madrid at the time of the *coup* to take command of the Armies of Spain. On Napoleon's instructions, he refused to recognize Ferdinand as king. Both Ferdinand and Charles then wrote to Napoleon asking for mediation of the royal succession.

Napoleon summoned both to Bayonne. He could have maintained Ferdinand, who would then have continued to adhere to the Franco-Spanish alliance. Ferdinand's subsequent conduct as king after 1814 suggests he would also have supported the administrative reforms the emperor wanted. By this time, however, the Spanish situation was so chaotic Napoleon was convinced the country needed more of an iron hand than Ferdinand could ever apply. The meeting at Bayonne also confirmed his low opinion of the Spanish royal family. Their mutual recriminations culminated with the Queen's announcement that her own son was illegitimate. Napoleon easily manipulated all sides, first forcing Ferdinand to return the crown to his father,

in the Peninsular War, 1808-1814 (New York: Verso, 2008), 35-6.

and then convincing Charles to allow the emperor to give it to whomever he wished. Ferdinand was then forced to renounce his remaining rights. Napoleon might have thought he had won a bloodless victory. Events were shortly to prove him wrong. It was in the midst of these intrigues that Napoleon's new ambassador replaced Beauharnais in Madrid.

Laforest

Laforest's ambassadorship was the most important diplomatic post he ever held, and was the culmination of a long and distinguished career that extended from the monarchy through the Revolution. His background and diplomatic training gave him a combination of skills and talents that allowed him to play a central role in the governance of the Spanish kingdom under Joseph.

Antoine René Charles Mathurin, comte de Laforest, was born on August 7, 1756.⁸⁸ His family had a long history of service to the state. Among his more prominent ancestors was Pierre de La Forest, Archbishop of Paris and royal adviser to King Jean II "the Good" (r. 1350-64). Six generations had also served as diplomats prior to Antoine's entry into the Foreign Service, including Jean de Laforest, Francis I's ambassador to the Ottoman Empire.

Before he entered the Foreign Ministry, Laforest had had a brief military career in the Régiment de Hainault. He joined the Foreign Service in December 1774, and was attached to

⁸⁸ This biographical essay is drawn from the Introductory essay by Geoffroy de Grandmaison, in Laforest, *Correspondance*, the entry "La Forest," in Henri-Robert, 223-4, and Laforest's personnel file in the *Archives des Affaires Etrangères*: AAE. Volumes Reliés (Dossiers Individuels) Vol. 41, fol. 330-369. The family name is listed in various places as La Forest, Laforêt, or Laforest. Since "Laforest" is how the ambassador signed his name in his correspondence, I use this form throughout.

France's first embassy to the United States of America. In August 1783, he was named Vice-Consul to Savannah; he later served as Consul in Philadelphia and New York City. In 1788, he was named Consul-General.

Laforest remained in the United States during the early years of the Revolution. His politics were moderate, and there is some evidence he organized a petition among French expatriates in New York City supporting a constitutional monarchy. Fortunately, this was never discovered, or his later arrest by the Committee of Public Safety might have had an unfortunate ending. He was finally recalled to France in May 1793 by the Convention, but was able to delay his return for several months. While in America Laforest formed an important connection with Talleyrand, who was there as a refugee. He appears to have assisted the future minister in some land speculation, as the latter was always on the lookout for some moneymaking scheme (Talleyrand would later serve as Laforest's mentor when he returned to head the Foreign Ministry in 1797). He finally arrived in Paris in early 1794, and was immediately accused of being a royalist. Fortunately, for him, the Terror ended before he was brought to trial.

When Talleyrand was appointed Foreign Minister by the Directory, Laforest was appointed head of the finance division. After Napoleon came to power in 1799, he briefly served as Director of the Post Office. He next worked on a treaty of alliance and commerce with the United States. Laforest was also attached to the deputation (headed by Joseph Bonaparte) to conclude the Treaty of Lunéville with Austria (signed in October 1801). Following that, he was briefly Ambassador to Bavaria, and later French delegate to the Imperial Diet in Ratisbon, where he ensured the treaty was properly implemented.

Laforest received an even more important posting when, in 1804, he was named ambassador to Berlin. There he worked successfully to keep Prussia neutral until, despite his

best efforts, King Frederick William III decided to join the Third Coalition in November 1805.⁸⁹ Returning to France, he was considered for the post as ambassador to Russia, until Napoleon decided on Caulaincourt.⁹⁰ Laforest then remained without a posting until being appointed ambassador to Madrid in April 1808.⁹¹

Laforest and the Beginnings of the Peninsular War⁹²

Before discussing Laforest's reports, a few general comments on their contents are necessary. First, the ambassador was a prolific writer, corresponding with the Ministry in Paris at least once every other day, and in some periods more frequently. Like all ambassadors, Laforest's primary task was to keep the French government apprised of events in Spain. But he also did much more. The standard study of Napoleon's Spanish collaborators, Miguel Artola's *Los Afrancesados*,⁹³ describes Laforest as *the* center of political life during the Bonapartist

⁸⁹ The latter's victory at Austerlitz on December 2, 1805, put an end to the Third Coalition before the Prussian army could join it. Much of Laforest's correspondence as Ambassador in Berlin and Talleyrand's correspondence with Laforest can be found (in the original French) in Paul Bailleu. *Preussen und Frankreich von 1795 bis 1807: Diplomatische correspondenzen*, 2 Vols. (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1881-7).

⁹⁰ That Napoleon would consider Laforest for what was then the most important French diplomatic post in Europe suggests his appreciation of the latter's diplomatic skills. Napoleon [Fontainebleu] to Champagny. September 23, 1807. AAE. M+D France, Vol. 1779, fol. 104. The reasons for Laforest's replacement by Caulaincourt are unclear, though it is possible that the Russians expressed dissatisfaction with him.

⁹¹ Napoleon first suggested that he would appoint Laforest Ambassador to Spain in Napoleon [St. Cloud] to Champagny. March 25, 1808. AAE. M+D France Vol. 1780, fol. 73. The official appointment was not made until April 30th.

⁹² Following British usage, I refer to the events of 1808-1814 as the Peninsular war. French historians refer to it as the "*Guerre de l'Espagne*," while the Spanish generally call it the "*Guerra de la Independencia*."

⁹³ Los Afrancesados literally meant, "the Frenchified," and was used to describe those who collaborated

kingdom. He was certainly well informed. Laforest's correspondence has been acknowledged since the time it was published as the best and most complete history of the politics of Joseph's court, and has been used as such by historians who study the Peninsular War.

Laforest entered Madrid as it still was recovering from the dual shocks of the revolt that had put Ferdinand on the throne, and the subsequent abdication of all the Bourbons. Murat records a conversation with Laforest in which the latter told him: "I do not expect [we will] find much enthusiasm for us in Madrid."⁹⁴ Murat reported that Laforest had been put in charge of a "Committee of Respected and Capable Men," given the task of preparing the ground for Napoleon's invasion.⁹⁵

Since it was initially unclear who would be placed on the throne, Laforest began to concern himself with this important question. The two choices were Murat, already commanding the French armies in Spain, and Joseph, then King of Naples. Laforest had at first been instructed to place himself under Murat's orders, and it is clear the ambassador supported the general's candidacy.⁹⁶ Laforest extolled his "tireless energy" and reported that "although His Imperial Highness [Murat] has tried to spread [the news] that His Majesty the King of Naples

with King Joseph. Prior to the Peninsular War it was used more generally to refer to those Spaniards who wished to introduce foreign ideas and practices (especially those connected with the Enlightenment) to Spain. Gérard Dufour, "Afrancesados Espagnols," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 39-41; Miguel Artola. *Los Afrancesados* (Madrid: Ediciones Turner, 1976), 199-202.

⁹⁴ Murat to Napoleon. April 10, 1808 [Midnight], cited in Laforest, I, 3.

⁹⁵ Murat to Napoleon. April 18, 1808, cited in Comte de Murat. *Murat, Lieutenant de L'Empereur en Espagne, 1808: D'après sa correspondance inédite et des documents originaux*. (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie, Imprimeurs-Éditeurs, 1897), 460.

⁹⁶ Napoleon [Marac] to Champagny. April 30, 1808. AAE. M+D France, Vol. 1780, fol. 99. Napoleon had offered the crown of Spain to his brothers Louis and Jerome (both of whom rejected it) before settling on Joseph.

was destined to reign in Spain, I have noticed for some days now a public preference for Murat, [and] a public coolness towards Joseph...”⁹⁷ Laforest was soon reprimanded by Napoleon for “encouraging” Murat.⁹⁸

It is possible that Laforest’s support was encouraged by Talleyrand and Joseph Fouché, Napoleon’s Police Minister, who wanted to be able to bring Murat to Paris quickly so he could succeed the emperor if necessary. If Murat was in Spain, he would only be two weeks from Paris. Napoleon was so suspicious of these manoeuvrings that he had Laforest’s correspondence with Talleyrand monitored by the police. There were of course perfectly good reasons to support Murat’s candidacy. Joseph lacked the ability to stand up to his brother even when hundreds of miles separated them. Laforest also rightly suspected that Spain needed a warrior-king, and Joseph did not have Murat’s military experience or steely nerve. At the same time, there were important reasons to reject Murat’s suit, especially after the events of the *dos de mayo* left him with a great deal of blood on his hands.

Madrid had erupted violently against the French occupiers on May second. This began when Murat had sought to move additional members of the Bourbon royal family to Bayonne. A mob had surrounded the French embassy and military posts around the city. French troops, under the general’s orders, then brutally suppressed the demonstration. Laforest was obliged to portray this as a French victory: “The events have provided all the things we expect of a great victory. The rabble that is Ferdinand’s party have been completely beaten.”⁹⁹ Still, all of Laforest’s lobbying was for naught—Napoleon announced his choice in May. Joseph was to have Spain.

⁹⁷ Laforest to Champagny. May 11, 1808, in Laforest, I, 9.

⁹⁸ Napoleon [Bayonne] to Champagny, no. 105. May 17, 1808. AAE. M+D France, Vol. 1780, fol. 114-114 bis.

⁹⁹ Laforest to Champagny. May [4], 1808, in Laforest I, 4.

Murat was to be given Naples.

The French at first hoped Spaniards would accept the new government. Attempts were made to negotiate with various juntas that had already begun to organize in the provinces.¹⁰⁰ (Prior to Joseph's arrival in Madrid in July, Laforest had effectively ruled the capital, as well as those provinces that were still taking orders from the central government. Remarkably, he had even been able to raise a loan of three million *reales* for the government's basic expenses.)¹⁰¹

Laforest identified General Savary, who had replaced Murat as commander of the armies in Spain, as one of his greatest problems. He complained that "...the General talks endlessly of pillage, fire, and massacre. I would be ashamed to repeat all the things that escape him almost every minute. And the name of the emperor is always cited as authority! His proposals are supported by indiscreet young [French] officers, by the servants, [and even] by [some] Spanish; stories of these outbursts circulate and cause widespread fear, while in no way rendering [the Spanish] more submissive. They also encourage too many in our military [to engage in] useless acts of violence."¹⁰² (Laforest would repeat his complaints a year later. Writing to Champagny in the summer of 1809, he even suggested negotiating with the insurgents in order to widen the already large divisions among the Spanish, as well as to create enmity between them and the British.)¹⁰³ To win over the Spanish people, Laforest repeatedly opposed pillaging. He always distinguished between two kinds of war: moral and destructive, and between "good" generals such as Sebastiani, whom he praised for keeping looting to a minimum, and others who gave

¹⁰⁰ See Champagny [Bayonne] to Laforest. May 17, 1808, no. 5. AAE. CP Espagne. Vol. 674, fol. 326-7.

¹⁰¹ Vincent Haeghele, *Napoléon et Joseph Bonaparte: le pouvoir et l'ambition* (Paris: Tallandier, 2010) [Henceforth cited as *Napoléon et Joseph*], 340-1.

¹⁰² Laforest to Champagny. June 25, 1808, in Laforest, I, 118.

¹⁰³ Laforest to Champagny. August 29, 1808, in Laforest, I, 248-9.

unbridled license to their soldiers.¹⁰⁴

The contempt was mutual. Savary dismissed Laforest in a letter to Berthier, saying: “M. Laforest is too proper, and too much given to saying he wants to win [Spanish] hearts.”¹⁰⁵ He also made reference to an earlier quarrel: “I asked M. Laforest to obtain a portion of the taxes paid to Madrid for the army... He replied threateningly that he had the support of the emperor and [had been] sent by him to defend the Spanish against extortion... Being a diplomat, M. de Laforest does not understand [a soldier’s] plain speaking.”¹⁰⁶ Laforest in turn defended himself to the Foreign Minister as the defender of Spain against the excesses of military government.¹⁰⁷ Laforest’s dealings with Savary reveal that, unlike many French officials in the peninsular, he could on occasion be quite sympathetic to the Spanish. He did not always regard force as the best method to win the country, even if he did always carry out instructions from Paris. More than any of the generals, Laforest understood that his most important task was to win the trust and support of all who might support Joseph’s government, and to create in particular close relationships with the new king’s ministers. Why these highly placed Spaniards chose to collaborate is a question that must now be addressed.

The Nature of Collaboration and Resistance in Napoleonic Spain

In order to understand Laforest’s strategy, it is necessary to understand with whom

¹⁰⁴ Laforest to Champagny. July 5, 1809, in Laforest, II, 326; Laforest to Champagny. July 27, 1809, in Laforest, II, 349.

¹⁰⁵ Savary to Napoleon, June 26, 1808, cited in Laforest, I, 121. The language of “winning hearts” is well known to modern theories of counterinsurgency.

¹⁰⁶ Savary to Berthier. June 24, 1808, cited in Laforest, I, 120-1.

¹⁰⁷ Laforest to Champagny. June 25, 1808, in Laforest, I, 120.

Laforest hoped to collaborate. A common belief among imperial officials was that each country contained a small group of “notables” who effectively dominated society. Laforest explained in a letter in July 1808 that “Spain has 10,500,000 people. One can say that 10,400,000 frankly don’t know what they want. It remains to the other 100,000 enlightened individuals to understand the needs of their nation, and so rally around the Napoleonic dynasty and the Constitution that it brings.”¹⁰⁸ This belief reflected Napoleon’s own understanding of how France should be governed. His policy since 1799 had been to create an *amalgame* of the bourgeoisie, the military, and the nobility of the *ancien régime*. Although Spain was much more conservative than France, Laforest, like many other French officials, expected Napoleonic-style reforms to succeed in Spain with the help of these enlightened few just as they had in France. (So did Napoleon. “The peoples of Germany, those of France, of Italy, of Spain, want equality and value liberal ideas,” Napoleon had written to his brother Jerome in Westphalia. What he really meant, as Owen Connelly observes, is that they would want enlightenment once they had benefited from it. But, as Connelly also notes, peasants almost everywhere either didn’t want those advantages, or at the very least saw them outweighed by the burdens of conscription and taxation.)¹⁰⁹ In a letter to General Victor, commander of one of the Imperial armies, Champagny echoed Laforest’s beliefs.¹¹⁰

The nature of the Spanish insurgents is of equal importance. The resistance has generally been regarded as a response of traditional forces against change. As already noted, the nobility, Church, and much of the peasantry were ready to oppose foreign inspired reform. Their opposition to the removal of Ferdinand by Joseph Bonaparte was only the latest manifestation of

¹⁰⁸ Laforest to Champagny. July 6, 1808, in Laforest, I, 143.

¹⁰⁹ Owen Connelly, *Napoleon’s Satellite Kingdoms*, (New York: The Free Press, 1965) p. 340.

¹¹⁰ Champagny [Bayonne] to General Victor. June 25, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne, Vol. 675, fol. 221-2.

this attitude.

Most Spaniards hated the French occupiers. The Catholic clergy was particularly obstinate in its opposition, whether from the pulpit, or, in some cases, in the ranks of the *guerrilleros*. Clerical opposition grew even more once Joseph began to reduce government funding of the Church, and to close a number of convents and monasteries. The French were soon labeled “atheists,” and Joseph, “the envoy of Satan.” Some priests even claimed Napoleon was the anti-Christ.

Many contemporary accounts marveled at the intensity of the resistance. A story from the memoirs of Joseph’s assistant, Stanislas Girardin, illustrates this. He relates how, while staying at an inn in Miranda, he saw an officer strike and arrest the proprietor. Girardin spoke up for the man, obtaining his release, and probably saving his life. The innkeeper’s wife ostentatiously refused to accept Girardin’s help: “[I would rather] perish than have my husband or my children be obligated to a Frenchman. I would not be Spanish if I accepted such a humiliation.” Although the innkeeper extended his personal thanks to Girardin, he made a chilling statement: “If [there] remained in Spain no [other] Frenchman than you, I would kill you with my own hands in order to save my country,” which was not far from the truth.¹¹¹

The events of the *dos de mayo* had been a catalyst for the guerrilla movement. In every Spanish province, rumors spread, (much like the Great Fear that had affected France in 1789), that the French were going to massacre much of the population. Locals believed that those who were left would “end up stripped of Church and king, while [be forced to] serve [the French] in

¹¹¹ Stanislas de Girardin. *À la cour du Roi Joseph: Souvenirs du Comte de Girardin, Annotés d’après les documents d’archives et les mémoires*, édité par Albert Savine. (Paris: Société des Éditions, Louis-Michaud: 1911), 97-9.

foreign wars.”¹¹²

In April 1809, the Central Junta published a manifesto authorizing a “corsair system” that basically called on the *guerrilleros* to ruthlessly attack the French wherever they were.¹¹³ This led to reprisals, which in turn alienated large sections of the population, encouraging further resistance. The revolt thus forced many peasants to declare for or against Joseph, although many would probably have preferred to remain quiescent.

Even so, joining the *guerrilleros* was frequently more about economic interest than patriotism. The four *reales* paid was often more than the average daily wage of a farm laborer. Unemployment also played a role in the rebellion. By May 1809, many had been put out of work by heavy spring rains that had damaged the harvest. They were as a result desperate for money. Bounties for joining the resistance thus had great appeal.¹¹⁴

Despite much bravado, the anti-French forces were not usually effective. Attempts to coordinate the Spanish regular army and the *guerrilleros* often failed due to regional and

¹¹² F. Sóla Montaña. *Els Manresans al Bruch: Relacions del Capdill en Maurici Carrió Referents a la Batalla de Bruch, 6 de Juny de 1808*. (Barcelona: 1908), 33. cited in Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon: Guerrillas, Bandits and Adventurers in Spain, 1808-1814* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 63. The best treatment of the Great Fear in France is still to be found in Georges Lefebvre. *The Great Fear of 1789; Rural Panic in Revolutionary France* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973).

¹¹³ “Instructions of the supreme central junta, April 17, 1809. All inhabitants are authorized to arm themselves, in order to attack and despoil French soldiers, either separately, or en masse, to make all kinds of difficulties for them, and to cause them as much harm as possible. These actions will be considered services rendered to the nation and will be compensated according to their merit (Article I). The booty that these detachments will seize will belong to them (Article IX)... [They will also] intercept enemy couriers (Article XI).” This is from Geoffroy de Grandmaison. *L’Espagne et Napoléon*, 3 Vols. (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1908-31), Vol. II, 87-8.

¹¹⁴ Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon*, 65-6.

personal rivalries. Most volunteers refused to serve outside their province. Indeed, the absence of true national, as opposed to regional, loyalties was one of the most striking aspects of the rebellion. This was also responsible for the failure to follow up the victory of Bailen in July 1808, an early (and rare) victory for the insurgents that had forced the French to pull out temporarily from Madrid. Had the various Spanish forces joined in an organized pursuit they might have crushed the outnumbered French. Instead, their lack of coordination allowed the imperial forces to regroup and wait for reinforcements.

The insurgency faced equally great long term problems. Regional quotas set by the Junta for a national army were almost never met, so it was eventually obliged to resort to conscription. Since clergy and nobles, along with government officials, skilled workers, students, and university graduates were exempt, only the poorest members of society were drafted. They resented their treatment. As one modern observer has noted, “the bulk of the population came to have little interest in the war... [and] such [support as there was] was squandered by the corruption and short-sightedness of local elites who wished to maintain [their] position in the face of the so-called Spanish revolution... Despite a massive propaganda effort that to this day [has] created the impression that the Spanish struggle against Napoleon was a new people’s crusade, the populace on the whole wanted nothing to do with [it]. Far from rushing to the colors, they had to be forced to take up arms, and even then did so with the utmost unwillingness.”¹¹⁵

The elites had good reason to be afraid of popular enthusiasm. Many peasants used the rebellion as an opportunity to attack the powerful and privileged. Riots that were supposedly

¹¹⁵ Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon*, 88.

directed at the French and the *Afrancesados* often targeted all authority.¹¹⁶ “What seemed at first to be resistance to the French was rather a state of general turmoil[,] occasioned by a mixture of resentment, poverty and despair, as the rural populace at one and the same time sought to protect itself against the demands of supposed friends and enemies alike, [while] pursu[ing] long-standing hatreds...”¹¹⁷

These conditions created a real opportunity for the French to win over the Spanish notables, if they could present themselves as guarantors of order, while at the same time taking a more compromising attitude towards Spanish traditions. Marshal Suchet implemented such policies in northeastern Spain, and was able to pacify most of the provinces under his command. He was in fact so successful that he managed to pay his soldiers regularly from taxes he collected. He was even able to send a surplus to the central government. Unfortunately, Suchet was unique among the emperor’s generals. Most preferred pillage, thus driving many to oppose them. The depredations of the imperial armies would eventually become a vital issue for Laforest, who understood better than most the opportunity that was being lost. This, however, was temporarily made moot when both Laforest and Joseph were obliged to flee Madrid in the

¹¹⁶ Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon*, 67-9. An anonymous letter to the Count de Floridablanca reports one such incident: “The town of Don Benito... has been in the most deplorable condition ever since... a number of discontented porters, day-laborers and artisans – men whose ignorance and immorality always incline them to do the worst – launched a furious attack... on the... town council at the very moment when the list of those eligible to be chosen for the defense of the fatherland was being drawn up. They demanded land and insisted that only the people with anything to lose go to war.” Letter to Floridablanca. November 12, 1808. Archivo Histórico Nacional [henceforth cited as AHN], Sección de Estado 52-A, no. 85, cited in Esdaile, 68-9. Collective violence at the point when the list of conscripts was being created is reminiscent of similar actions by French peasants (and royalists) in the Vendée during the Revolutionary Wars.

¹¹⁷ Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon*, 129.

summer of 1808.

From Madrid to Vitoria and Back Again

Laforest had at first been buoyed by news that a new French-inspired constitution had been approved by a Spanish delegation summoned at Bayonne.¹¹⁸ He was also happy to see the new king, upon his arrival in Madrid, offer amnesty to all Spaniards who, having previously resisted either the French army or his government, would swear an oath of loyalty to him.¹¹⁹ In spite of the May uprising, it seemed that by mid-summer these conciliatory gestures, and the new regime that made them, might be accepted. Unfortunately, the apparent unity expressed at Bayonne was soon exposed as a fraud. Many delegates, either because of honest patriotism or because they considered the French cause in Spain lost, were quick to repudiate both it and their oath after news of the Bailen defeat. One delegate, Pedro de Cevallos, wrote a devastating indictment of the events in Bayonne, entitled “Exposition of the Practices and Machinations which led to the Usurpation of the Crown of Spain, and the Means Adopted by the Emperor of the French to Carry It into Execution.”¹²⁰ Cevallos’ pamphlet soon became an international

¹¹⁸ Champagne [Bayonne] to Laforest. July 7, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne, Vol. 675, fol. 324-5.

¹¹⁹ “Decree of Amnesty.” July 23, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne, Vol. 675, fol. 396-8.

¹²⁰ Pedro Cevallos. *An Exact and Impartial Account of the Most Important Events which have Occurred in Aranjuez, Madrid, and Bayonne: from the 17th of March until the 15th of May, 1808: Treating the Fall of the Prince of Peace, and the Termination of the Friendship and Alliance between the French and Spanish Nations/ Written in Madrid, Published in Cadiz, and Translated in this City* (New York: Ezra Sargeant, 1808). Cevallos had served Charles IV as Minister-Secretary of State after 1800. Considered an Anglophile, he had supported Ferdinand during the Escorial and Aranjuez affairs. He had also accompanied Ferdinand to Bayonne, and lobbied various French officials there for his recognition as King of Spain. Despite this, he temporarily rallied to Joseph’s government, before defecting to the resistance. He would later serve Ferdinand as first minister until he was removed in disgrace

bestseller, with copies translated and published from Moscow to New York. In Spain, it helped rally opposition to Joseph. More importantly, Napoleon's enemies across Europe began to believe after Bailen that his armies were not invincible.

Laforest had nothing but hatred and contempt for the *guerrillero* leaders. Still, he was remarkably sympathetic to Spaniards as a whole. His reports never described them as barbaric, even when reporting atrocities committed against French soldiers and officials. He also understood the success of French-style reforms would depend on conforming to some degree to the customs of the country. His evenhanded approach was in marked contrast to the brutal recommendations made by most generals.

It was a demeanor he sometimes found hard to maintain. Laforest had been initially disappointed by the poor attendance during Joseph's official entry into Madrid. Despite this, he still believed a few victories would soon cause the Spaniards to rally to the new regime. He was to be disappointed again. Bailen overturned all his plans, and caused a panic in the capital.¹²¹ Savary told Joseph he had to abandon Madrid.¹²² Although many contemporaries criticized the king for retreating too soon, this escape was in fact necessary.

Joseph, his court, and Laforest found refuge in the northern city of Vitoria. On arrival, the ambassador immediately sent a report to Paris about those Spaniards who had chosen to stay in the capital, and thus through their actions repudiate their oaths.¹²³ Those, he knew, would be

in 1820. Jean Tulard, "Cevallos (Don Pedro de)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 413.

¹²¹ Laforest to Champigny. July 29, 1808, in Laforest, I, 196.

¹²² Laforest, who reported this, is here either mistaken or deceived. Most historians agree that it was Joseph who insisted that Madrid be immediately evacuated. Liscombe, 54.

¹²³ "List of Persons who accompanied His Majesty the King on the Retreat to Burgos." August 11, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 676, fol. 35-6.

targeted for retribution once Joseph returned. Laforest also seconded the opinion of most French generals that only Napoleon himself, at the head of substantial French reinforcements, could restore the situation.¹²⁴

Napoleon arrived at Vitoria in November, bringing with him more than 100,000 battle hardened soldiers. This raised the numbers of the French forces to more than 260,000. With his arrival, Joseph's wavering Spanish ministers felt obliged to renew their support of the Franco-Spanish alliance.¹²⁵ These included two men with whom Laforest would later work closely - the Minister of War, Gonzalo O'Farill, and the Minister of Finance, Francisco Cabarrús.¹²⁶

Within a month, Napoleon had retaken Madrid and forced a British army to evacuate Corunna. Concerned about Austrian preparations for war, he then left. Laforest returned to the capital with Joseph. He spent most of the next five years there. The king immediately distributed two hundred medals of the Royal and Military Order of Spain to Spaniards who had remained loyal.¹²⁷ It was at this time that Laforest was also rewarded, being named by Napoleon a count of the empire, thus making him a member of the new imperial nobility.¹²⁸

Despite the swift reversal of events, Joseph was nonetheless privately despondent, having seen himself abandoned by so many after one battle. He told his brother that he wished to abdicate.¹²⁹ He would express a similar desire several times over the next few years. Laforest

¹²⁴ See for example Laforest to Champagny. August 12, 1808, in Laforest, I, 210.

¹²⁵ Laforest to Champagny. November 5, 1808, in Laforest, I, 365. This was a sign of Laforest's acceptance into the new order, as well as the merging of the old nobility with the new.

¹²⁶ See their biographies in Appendix I.

¹²⁷ Laforest to Champagny. January 21, 1809, in Laforest, II, 3-6.

¹²⁸ Henri-Robert, 223. Laforest received a new coat of arms as well.

¹²⁹ Joseph first threatened to abdicate December 1808, over a number of decrees that ordered the closing of many convents, and abolished the Inquisition, acts that Joseph considered an infringement of Spanish sovereignty.

was obliged each time have to talk him out of it. He always succeeded, but it was a constant effort. Joseph in the end never willingly quit Madrid. Sensing weakness, Napoleon gradually circumscribed Joseph's authority over Spain.¹³⁰ At the same time Laforest's own influence in the capital grew.

The ambassador's first task on his return was to help convince the remnants of the diplomatic corps to recognize the new regime. He especially wanted Russian ambassador Strogonov to persuade his government to recognize Joseph.¹³¹ Laforest regarded it as a personal victory when he finally did so.¹³² By the end of 1809 all of France's allies had recognized the Bonapartist kingdom. Only Britain and the United States continued to recognize the Central Junta. Once again it seemed that Joseph's rule was becoming established in Spain. Laforest believed he could now turn to his main task of winning friends for Joseph in an increasingly pacified Spain. Unfortunately, he could not.

Conclusions

Historians have often referred to the reign of Charles IV as "the crisis of Spain's *ancien regime*." Most Spaniards at its beginning were impoverished, while the elites opposed any changes to their privileges, especially in the countryside. Only substantive agrarian and economic reforms instituted by a determined monarch could have changed things. But neither Charles IV (nor Charles III before him) had had either the courage or the power to overcome the elites. Although Joseph's regime seemed willing to do this, the civil war, combined with the

Joseph [Al Pardo] to Napoleon. December 8, 1808, cited in Haegeler, *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 611.

¹³⁰ Laforest to Champagne. January 11, 1809. Laforest, I, 427.

¹³¹ Laforest to Champagne. August 8, 1808, in Laforest, I, 200.

¹³² Laforest to Champagne. February 16, 1809, in Laforest, II, 84-5.

crushing debts inherited from the Bourbons, made its efforts extremely difficult.

For these reasons, Laforest had a much more difficult task than Otto. In attempting to transform Spain into a dutiful satellite, Laforest had to deal with untamed reactionary elements, the chaos of civil war, and a widespread belief that Joseph's government was illegitimate. The same groups that had vigorously opposed reform prior to 1808 would, with some exceptions, be at the forefront of resistance to the French.

Only a small group of liberals, the *Afrancesados*, supported French-style reforms. Many of these were civil servants who had long hoped for a reforming king who, by ending entailment of large estates, and reducing the economic domination by the Church and nobility, would revivify the rural economy. In contrast, reform in Bavaria took place in a much more hospitable environment, since important interests supported changes they knew would allow industry and trade to flourish. Moreover, Spain had had no Montgelas, (or even a Max Joseph), to launch the major reforms the kingdom needed in the years immediately prior to the invasion. Godoy had contemplated these, but as an outsider to all established factions - Church, aristocracy, an emerging middle class, the civil service, and the military - he had no power base upon which to build a program.¹³³ A coward and shameless opportunist, he had soon backed down before organized opposition.

Another major difficulty for Laforest was of course the manner in which Joseph had come to Spain. In the right circumstances it is quite possible the Spanish might have accepted a member of the Bonaparte family. But the shameful way in which Napoleon forced the Bourbons to hand over the crown could never be forgiven by most of the nation. The participants in the insurgency, however confused their aims (and organization), still considered Ferdinand their

¹³³ Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 45-6.

legitimate king, and Joseph the usurper. The latter was therefore never able to enjoy the general acceptance that the Spanish Bourbons had enjoyed after 1714. As a result, coercion was needed to accomplish anything. Even appeals to self-interest usually failed. Except for the small group who had tied their careers to the new king, the Spanish had to be subjugated militarily before the new dynasty could feel secure.

In short, French efforts to exploit Spain, and the attempts of the *Afrancesados* to institute reforms, were shaped by enormous financial and political problems. These difficulties, as well as Laforest's efforts to set up a pro-French party within the Madrid government, are the subject of Chapter Seven.

Chapter Seven: Laforest and the Napoleonic Management of Spain

Even within the Napoleonic Empire, Spain was exploited to an unprecedented degree. Attempts by Joseph's Madrid government to assert its authority were undermined by the demands that French officials and armies made on both resources and people. In response, Joseph sought relief from both his brother and Laforest, and when he did not get it, repeatedly threatened to abdicate. This would have been a terrible blow to the French position. Preventing it was one of Laforest's most important tasks. Fortunately, he was always able to persuade the king to change his mind. This allowed the imperial system to continue unchecked.

The most important task of French ambassadors within the Napoleonic Empire was manipulating satellite governments. Because of the devastating effects of exploitation on the empire's "allies," this was never an easy job. They had to constantly convince the satellites that despite appearances to the contrary, exploitation was in the end for the good of all, and more importantly, that French exactions were only temporary. Nowhere was this task more difficult than in Spain.

On at least two occasions, after the creation of military governments in the north in February 1810, and again after the annexation of Catalonia to France in 1812, it appeared that the Madrid government would collapse due to the outrage of Joseph's collaborators at these infringements of national sovereignty. In both cases, it was Laforest who managed to convince the *Afrancesados* to remain, averting what would otherwise have been a political disaster. As Otto had demonstrated in Bavaria, it was the ambassador who was the keystone of the imperial system. This chapter begins by describing who these Spanish collaborators were, and Laforest's interactions with them.

Laforest's Collaborators: *Los Afrancesados*

As already mentioned, pre-Napoleonic attempts to promulgate reforms in Spain had not received

much public support. Godoy's association with reform had generated conservative opposition even before it was associated with foreign rule. Yet at the same time, thousands of Spaniards willingly chose to collaborate with the French. Happily, several historians have studied their motives. J. Lopez Tabar, drawing on the Foreign Ministry Archives, has identified 4,172 *Afrancesados*, dividing them by groups: nobles, clergy, administrators, military, and servants, as well as those whose professional and social origins are unknown.¹

Of the entire group, ninety-nine were nobles. Two hundred and fifty-one were clergy, including two Archbishops, seven Bishops, fifteen monks, twenty-four prebendaries (clergymen who received a subsistence allowance from the state), eighty-six priests, and 117 clergy of other ranks. There were 979 officers and soldiers (twenty-three percent of the total). One hundred and twenty-three were identified as *particularas* (servants). The largest category, 2,433 individuals (or fifty-nine percent), were identified as bureaucrats in Joseph's ministries. It was natural that Spain's civil servants would gravitate towards Joseph, as they would to any ruler, since they wanted to keep their jobs. Some doubtless had more disinterested reasons, seeing in the new king an opportunity to implement the reforms they had hoped for for almost a century.² Tabar further divides them by the ministry in which each served: 1,039

¹ J. Lopez Tabar. *Los famosos traidores. Los afrancesados durante la crisis del Antiguo Régimen (1808-1833)* (Madrid: 2001), 406. The Foreign Ministry recorded biographical information of all the *Afrancesados* who fled to France in 1813, providing future historians with the best data about them. Tabar chose 1810 as his starting date in order not to include the many Spaniards who briefly swore loyalty to Joseph in 1808 and 1809 when it appeared he was going to win, but patriotically defected to the resistance after Bailen.

² Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 3-4, 19-22, 55, 66-7, 304, 437. Stanley and Barbara Stein argue that Spanish civil servants had gradually come to believe by the end of the eighteenth century that the Spanish government was in desperate need of substantive internal and economic reforms if it wished to retain its position as a great power against British attempts to seize their overseas possessions and trade. They looked back on the eighteenth century as a long period of Spanish decline that could only be reversed by a complete overhaul of the government along French lines. As with the Bavarians, the

were in the Finance Ministry, 490 in Interior, 362 in the Police, and 324 in Justice; the remaining 282 were distributed among the rest. Tabar distinguishes between those who had genuinely cast their lot with Joseph, the *Josephinos*, and the *Juramentos*, careerists who remained in the service to keep their job. The *Josephinos* were fewer in number, but very important, since they included many high-ranked officials.

Of the *Afrancesados*, 2,933 (or seventy percent) went into exile in France after 1813. Many would die there, although Ferdinand, desperate for experienced officials, did allow some to return. He would even appoint Joseph's former Minister of the Interior, the Marquis de Almenara (repatriated to Spain in 1822), to his Council of Finance.³

Laforest's position allowed him to know all about the internal debates of Joseph's government. He knew that ministers and members of the new Spanish Council of State disagreed on the basic goals of the new government. Laforest also knew much about their political infighting, and the deleterious effect it had on attempts to create a stable, reform-oriented government. They also disagreed about methods, from how rebellious provinces should be dealt with to how the government should be organized. Resistance to reform had been a continual problem under the Bourbons, so winning this

administrative reforms introduced to France by Napoleon after 1800 were seen as the model that they should emulate, arguing that it was these reforms that had transformed France into the greatest and most powerful nation in Europe. Moreover, since the Spanish Bourbons appeared to have repeatedly missed opportunities to introduce such reforms beforehand, many reformers came to believe that only Napoleon could begin the regeneration of their country, and if that required the replacement of the Bourbons by a member of the Bonaparte family, that was a price they were willing to pay.

³ Xavier Magescas argues that another factor in Ferdinand's efforts to court the *Afrancesados* was to encourage French investment in the Spanish economy. Magescas, "Les ralliés et les convertis: elites et notables européens au service du Grand Empire. L'exemple de l'Espagne," in *Napoléon et l'Europe*, 224.

group over was important to its implementation.⁴

Laforest divided the political factions in Joseph's cabinet into "democrats" and "aristocrats."⁵ Democrats included Cabarrús and Jose Mazarredo y Salazar, the Minister of Marine. Aristocrats included Campo-Alange, Mariano Luis Urquijo, the Minister of Finance, and Pablo de Arribas, soon to be Minister of Police. Gonzalo O'Farill, the War Minister, remained in both camps. In truth, Laforest appears simply to have divided Joseph's court into the king's supporters, the democrats, and his more tepid partisans, the aristocrats. These "parties" probably did not have any coherent ideology.

The *Afrancesados* represented a very small part of Spain's population, and only a small number of these were as pro-French as Laforest desired, which is to say, entirely subordinate to Napoleon. Laforest tried to cultivate relationships with several of Joseph's Ministers, including O'Farill, Cabarrús, Mazarredo, and Arribas.⁶ Xavier Magescas suggests that what Laforest had wanted was to create a "French Party" within the Madrid government that took its orders from him, and not Joseph.⁷ Laforest used this group to keep himself apprised of the day-to-day events in the councils of government, even during periods when the king sought to restrict his access to the court. The next question is how did this French party develop?

⁴ Laforest to Champagny. March 3, 1809, in Laforest, II, 107.

⁵ Laforest to Champagny. September 15, 1809, in Laforest, II, 429. Also see Laforest to Champagny. November 8, 1808, in Laforest, I, 362, about a debate published in the *Gaceta de Madrid* over whether the government should be established on the basis of democratic or aristocratic principles.

⁶ The Ministers of War, Finance, Cults, and Treasury, respectively.

⁷ Magescas, «Joseph I et les afrancesados,» in *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* [Henceforth cited as *A.H.R.F.*] Numéro 336 (April-June 2004): 169-84.

Laforest and the French Party

There was a pro-French faction in Spain's government and society even before the Napoleonic invasion. Because of the long collaboration of France and Spain in the eighteenth century through the Bourbon Family Pact, this is not surprising.⁸ For the liberal, reformist wing of the civil service in particular, there was a "guarded admiration" for Napoleon Bonaparte. This group hoped that with the emperor's support Spain could be regenerated.⁹ This was best expressed by a memoir written in November 1801 by Godoy's financial adviser, Miguel Cayetano Soler, in which he stated that France "[could] help us counter British power, which is more threatening than ever," while "pull[ing] us out of the fatal state in which we are sunk [by] assisting us in promoting our interests..."¹⁰

The formation of Laforest's "French Party" can also be traced to another memorandum, probably written by Councilor of State Pablo de Arribas (the future Police Minister) to Joseph in August 1808.¹¹ Following a debate amongst the *Afrancesados* over whether negotiations should be opened with the resistance, Arribas recommended relying solely on military force, characterizing negotiations with the

⁸ Formally enacted in 1733 by the Treaty of the Escorial, the Bourbon *Pacte de Famille* declared that the kings of France and Spain would join their interests against mutual enemies. It was renewed by the Treaty of Fontainebleau in 1743 and again by the Treaty of Paris in 1761. This last established a permanent alliance, and brought Spain into the Seven Years War as a French ally. Although Spain lost many ships, and Florida, to the British, the two states continued to abide by the agreement until the Revolution executed Louis XVI in 1793. Lynch, 137-9, 140-1, 317-24.

⁹ Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 302.

¹⁰ Miguel Cayetano Soler, "Memoria...November 28, 1801," cited in Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 302.

¹¹ Arribas [Vitoria] to King Joseph, [date uncertain, but soon after August 13, 1808], cited in *Correspondance politique et militaire du Roi Joseph*, edité par Albert du Casse, 10 Vols. (Paris: Perrotin, 1856-7), Vol. IV, 469-77. Arribas' authorship of this memoir is not established, though Magescas considers him the most likely candidate. See Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 72-4.

juntas as “chimerical.”¹² This, however, meant that Joseph would have to be dependent on French arms until the rebels were defeated, thus making him subordinate to the emperor in all things. Joseph preferred instead to maintain some independence from his brother. This meant he also often came into conflict with the ambassador.

Laforest publicly denied that a French party was needed at the court. Indeed, he would deny that it existed at all.¹³ In fact, one can identify several individuals who largely followed Laforest’s directions. Arribas was among them, even allowing the ambassador to read police reports.¹⁴ Others included the aforementioned Marquis d’Almenara, the comte de Campo-Alange, and Mariano Luis Urquijo. Laforest also made references in his correspondence to women who passed information to him about discussions at the court and in the cabinet.¹⁵ Although small in number, Laforest’s closest collaborators were very valuable.

Joseph was painfully aware of this. The “French party” informed about debates over every law and decree. The ambassador in turn reported regularly to Paris. As Rafael Cortada notes:

...it was not possible for Joseph or his agents to keep imperial instructions in abeyance because Laforest assiduously reported every detail concerning their implementation.¹⁶

Thus, even though Laforest was not always present in the meetings of the royal councils, his presence

¹² During the early years of the Peninsular War, Joseph hoped to open negotiations with the British so that the British and French would both agree to leave the peninsula. Unfortunately, this never had any real chance of succeeding. See Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 357.

¹³ Laforest to Champagny. October 14, 1808, [Vitoria] in Laforest, I, 334.

¹⁴ The *Gaceta de Madrid* was the official newspaper of the government. Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 399.

¹⁵ See for example, Laforest to Champagny. March 3, 1812, in Laforest, VI, 105-6. Unfortunately, Laforest does not mention any women by name.

¹⁶ Cortada, “The Government of Spain under Joseph Bonaparte,” 159.

was always felt. The king knew that even the smallest act contrary to Napoleon's wishes would draw swift censure from the emperor. It is not surprising, therefore, that Joseph felt antagonistic to the ambassador, especially considering his difficult personal relationship with his brother.

The Ambassador and the King: Laforest and Joseph Bonaparte

Joseph Bonaparte had been born on Corsica in January 1768, a year and a half before Napoleon.¹⁷ Having first considered the priesthood, and then a military career, he eventually obtained a degree in law from the University of Pisa.¹⁸ Following the outbreak of the French Revolution, Joseph joined Napoleon in a failed effort by the Bonaparte clan to win Corsica for the Republic.¹⁹ He was then forced to flee ignominiously to the mainland, while the Corsican nationalist Pasquale Paoli, with British support, declared independence.

Joseph's career subsequently languished until Napoleon got him posted as commissary for the Army of Italy in 1796.²⁰ He continued to rise following his brother's victories in Italy, and in April 1797

¹⁷ The biographical information for Joseph is drawn from Jean Tulard, "Joseph Bonaparte," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 85-6; Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 11-3; and Haegelé, *Napoléon et Joseph*.

¹⁸ Dorothy Carrington. *Napoleon and his Parents: On the Threshold of History* (New York: Dutton, 1990), 137, 164. His brother Napoleon entered the military school at Brienne the same year. The death of their father Carlo in 1785 seems to have put an end to any desire of Joseph's to enter the priesthood. Napoleon considered his brother to be poorly suited to the difficulties and demands of a military career, a fact that is borne out by Joseph's feeble efforts when placed in command of French forces in Spain in 1808, and again in 1812-3. Joseph later claimed in his memoirs that his decision not to join the army was a result of his father's deathbed request; it seems more likely that he was dissuaded from enlisting by the rest of his family. Carrington, 188.

¹⁹ During this time, Joseph served as a member of the Municipality of Ajaccio, Corsica's capital, and as a judge on the Revolutionary Tribunal there. Haegelé, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 64-9.

²⁰ Joseph had briefly been appointed to be *Commissaire de Guerre* during the 1794 siege of Toulon, where Napoleon

was elected to the Council of 500 as Deputy for Corsica. He chose instead to accept postings as ambassador to Parma and then, in 1797, to Rome.²¹ In December of that year an aborted Roman revolution forced him to flee once again. Returning to France, he at last took his seat in the Council of 500, where he played a minor role, devoting most of his time to literature. He did help rally support for the Brumaire *coup*, and was rewarded with posts as deputy in the *Corps législatif* and member of the Council of State.

Between 1800 and 1801 Napoleon appointed Joseph to head the negotiating teams working on the Treaty of Mortefontaine²² (with the United States), as well as the Treaties of Amiens and Lunéville.²³ It was then that he first met Laforest, who did well enough to receive some praise from the future king.²⁴ It seems clear that Napoleon trusted Joseph, even if the latter was then largely operating under the direction of Talleyrand. Following the creation of the empire, Joseph became an imperial prince and heir to the throne. He was also appointed Senator and Grand Officer of the Legion of Honor. In 1805, Joseph was offered and refused the Kingdom of Italy, since he did not want to give up his right of

first distinguished himself as commander of artillery. He played a role during the first Italian campaign by negotiating the Armistice of Cherasco with the Sardinians. This was to be the first of several diplomatic missions. Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 70.

²¹ After the Corsicans rose up against the French in 1793, they invited the British to come to their aid. The latter occupied the island, and in June 1794 the locals declared George III their king. This Anglo-Corsican kingdom lasted until the British abandoned the island in October 1796. Shortly thereafter, French control was brutally re-established. Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 89-90, 114.

²² Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 130

²³ Joseph also participated in the negotiations that led to the Concordat between France and the Vatican. Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 134-9.

²⁴ All evidence suggests that Laforest and Joseph worked well together during the Lunéville negotiations. Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 338.

succession. During the 1805 campaign he served as regent while the emperor led his armies in Germany and Austria.

In 1806, Napoleon finally convinced Joseph to take the crown of Naples.²⁵ There he began to implement the series of reforms that his brother-in-law Joachim Murat would continue, and which he would try to replicate in Spain.²⁶ Joseph did his best work in reorganizing the country's finances, albeit with the help of a French subsidy to keep the Neapolitan treasury from bankruptcy. This was another rare example of Napoleon providing an ally with financial support.²⁷ Joseph enjoyed his time in Naples, and for some time after he left hoped to convince his brother that he should be allowed to return.²⁸

Joseph was in fact the kind of reformer Spain needed. He was genuinely liberal. He had opposed the re-establishment of a hereditary monarchy in 1804 (although this did not prevent him from accepting thrones and titles from his brother), and was a reformer at heart. The decrees that Joseph promulgated as king, had they been carried out, would have transformed the country the way reformers of the Bourbon era had always wanted. They were designed to create a modern bureaucracy, and to solve many economic and social issues. The power of the Church and the *grandees* would have been much reduced. The disentailment of noble and ecclesiastical land would have helped transform the stagnant agrarian

²⁵ Joseph was also able to retain his right to inherit the imperial throne in the event of Napoleon's untimely demise. Haegele, *Napoleon et Joseph*, 206.

²⁶ Haegele, *Napoleon et Joseph*, 203-281.

²⁷ Haegele, *Napoleon et Joseph*, 209-23, 291, 307-9. The only other example I could find of such a subsidy was in Spain, when Joseph was king of that country.

²⁸ Joseph's Corsican-Italian background and fluency in Italian (although filled with many Gallicisms) made him feel more comfortable in that environment than in Spain. As he would later do in Iberia, Joseph spent considerable time traveling to different parts of his new kingdom, trying to appear as a legitimate king. Haegele, *Napoleon et Joseph*, 245-8, 345.

economy.²⁹

If Otto's relationship with Max Joseph was relatively collegial, even during the difficult days of the 1805 campaign, Laforest's interactions with Joseph were much more difficult. In his efforts to manage the king, Laforest was often put in the middle of the stormy relationship between the emperor and his brother. In their youth, the two had been very close. When Joseph had married Marie-Julie Clary in 1794, Napoleon decided to court Julie's sister Desirée (the future wife of Marshal Bernadotte and Queen of Sweden). Joseph's feelings for his brother can be summed up by a short passage he wrote to his wife in March 1806: "...I can truly say that he is the man who... I love the best... [and] that I often find myself much moved over the affection between us during these last twenty years."³⁰

Unhappily, there were also troubles. The more aggressive Napoleon from an early age had sought to dominate the easygoing Joseph. Later, Napoleon would tease his son, saying: "Lazybones! At your age I was beating up Joseph!" Avner Falk regards this as a conflict between Joseph, the favorite son, and Napoleon.³¹ This conflict continued into adulthood, when the brothers periodically clashed over political and family matters. Still, Napoleon chose Joseph to be regent twice; first in 1805, and again in 1814.

When Napoleon began to put members of his family on thrones, he made sure Joseph received the most important. On occasion Napoleon even sought Joseph's opinions, although he became

²⁹ For Laforest's discussion of the agrarian reforms Joseph intended to implement, see Laforest to Champagny. July 1, 1809, in Laforest, II, 311-3. On the reforms that were actually implemented, see Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 105-266.

³⁰ Joseph to Queen Julie. March 22, 1806, cited in Jacob Abbott. *Joseph Bonaparte* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1901), 134.

³¹ Avner Falk. *Napoleon against Himself: A Psychobiography* (New York: Pitchstone Publishing, 2007), 33-4, 84-92, 327-36.

increasingly convinced his brother was too soft to govern his empire. Napoleon however did trust his brother to be loyal, as indeed he was.

A clear dynamic had emerged by 1808 between the two that would later inform relations between Spain and France. Joseph was never able to stand up for himself. The imbalance in power between the two countries reinforced this tendency. As Napoleon became the most powerful man in Europe, his relationships with all his family members became increasingly autocratic. He attempted to micromanage them, just as he planned to reorder the continent. Lucien was eventually forced into exile because he refused to accept the marriage Napoleon had arranged for him, and Jerome was obliged to divorce his American first wife because his brother wanted to find him a royal bride.³² Louis was removed from the Netherlands in 1810 because of his resistance to the Continental System. When he gave family members thrones, he expected them to act in his interest, and not in those of the states to which they were assigned. This was not dissimilar to the relationship between Napoleon's ambassadors and the countries to which they were accredited. Ambassadors and monarchs sometimes sympathized with the exploited nations. In the case of the monarchs this was, understandably, more extreme. The ambassadors only wanted to be more efficient. Napoleon's family wanted to be loved. In dealing with Joseph, Napoleon would therefore constantly invoke "the interests of France," while expecting him to swallow each new hardship or humiliation imposed on Spain. The king frequently bridled.

Napoleon's unwillingness to take the concerns of his government seriously left Joseph chronically unhappy. In Naples, he had had at least some independence. In Spain, he had none. All this colored Laforest's personal and professional relationship with him. Joseph from the beginning had never wanted Laforest in the Madrid embassy. He had hoped that his friend Pierre Roederer would be

³² After the annulment of his marriage to Miss Patterson (who was pregnant at the time), Jerome married Princess Catherine of Wurttemberg. Bernardine Melchior-Bonnet, "Jerome Bonaparte," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 79.

made ambassador.³³ Within only a few months, Joseph had begun writing to Napoleon requesting the ambassador be recalled, claiming he had supported Murat's claim to the Spanish throne, which was true, and that he was corrupt, which was not.³⁴ The king would also shun Laforest for months.³⁵ Despite this, Laforest went out of his way to maintain a cordial relationship. He also tried to work with the king and his ministers in a less aggressive way than Napoleon demanded. For this he was chided by Champagny, who told him to be more active: "His [Imperial Majesty's] desire is that you insert yourself more in Spanish affairs, and that you meet with the ministers [and] the king [more often]."³⁶

Like Otto, Laforest was not unfriendly to the introduction of major liberal reforms to Spain.³⁷ Some of Laforest's writings make him seem a revolutionary firebrand, as when he refers to the "[rapacious] aristocrats who rule southern Spain, sacrificing to [their] vile passions [both] artisans and [farmers]. These cruel enemies of their country should be punished as soon as possible, [so that] the people, oppressed under their infamous yoke, can [once again] recover their liberty." According to Laforest, the Spanish masses would rally to Joseph, if only the king could effectively explain how

³³ See Appendix I for his biography. Roederer had no diplomatic experience, and Napoleon was determined to send Joseph an ambassador who could impose the imperial system on Spain. Joseph [Miranda] to Napoleon. September 19, 1808, in Haegle, *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 581.

³⁴ Joseph [Pardo] to Napoleon. January 19, 1809, in Haegle, *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 641-2.

³⁵ Laforest to Champagny. May 18, 1810, in Laforest, III, 387; Laforest to Champagny. May 25, 1810, in Laforest, III, 405.

³⁶ Champagny to Laforest, no. 14. February 19, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 162.

³⁷ Joseph's politics were at heart liberal and republican. Amongst his close friends and acquaintances were such luminaries as Lafayette and Germaine de Stael. He continued to correspond with Madame de Stael even after his brother forced her into exile, and she always considered him a close friend. Joseph was also Grand-Master of the Masonic lodge of the Grand-Orient. Haegle, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 130-1, 138-9, 156-7, 170-1.

reform would benefit these “useful classes,” while reducing the power of the privileged.³⁸ The Ebro decree of February 1810 would make his task of winning over the Spaniards much more difficult.

Managing the Madrid Government: the Ebro Decree, February 1810

Napoleon had decided as early as 1807 to annex the Spanish provinces north of the Ebro River and give the Spanish Portuguese territory in exchange. The plan had not been implemented in 1808 because of Junot’s defeat in Portugal, but it was not forgotten. Early in 1810, Napoleon was ready to act. He first ordered the formal establishment of French military government there. This he believed would reduce the cost of the Peninsular War by releasing more resources for the army, and at the same time create a buffer zone for France south of the Pyrénées.³⁹ Bringing the northern provinces under his direct control would also make the enforcement of the Continental System more effective.

For Laforest, the seizures north of the Ebro were a minor disaster. He knew it would inevitably generate anger among Spaniards outraged at the violation of their nation’s integrity. In the end it would take a great deal of persuasion and manipulation to convince the *Afrancesados* not to resign from the government *en masse*.

Now shorn of any pretense about Madrid’s sovereignty over the region, complete military control began with the division of thirteen northern provinces into four army districts.⁴⁰ Napoleon

³⁸ Laforest to Champagny. June 8, 1809, in Laforest, II, 275.

³⁹ One can see signs of Napoleon’s dissatisfaction with the cost of the war, and his determination to seize territory north of the Ebro, in his correspondence beginning in late 1809. See Vol. 20 of the *Correspondance de Napoléon I^{er}*.

⁴⁰ They were officially referred to as military governments. “Decree of the Emperor,” February 8, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 129-30: The decree read: “For the Government of Catalonia. Art. 1. The 7th Corps of the Army of Spain will take the title of Army of Catalonia. Art. 2. The Province of Catalonia will form a

cleverly ordered the Spanish flag replaced with the old Catalan banner, hoping to revive local dreams of independence.⁴¹ How Napoleon really intended to treat the locals was spelled out in a letter to Berthier: “You will tell General Suchet that he must use all the usual revenues of the country, as well as additional extraordinary levies, to pay for his army; [the French treasury] can no longer afford all [the expenses of the Spanish war.]”⁴² Napoleon by then had also begun to seriously regret his decision to put his brother on the Spanish throne. He even considered restoring Ferdinand, and attaching him to the Bonaparte family through marriage to the daughter of his brother Lucien.⁴³

For Joseph and the *Afrancesados*, the military takeover was a major catastrophe. It at once put an end to hopes of solving the Spanish treasury’s problems. Otto was instructed to tell them that the

Government under the title of Government of Catalonia. Art. 3. The Commander in Chief of the Army of Catalonia will be governor of the Province, and will unite all civil and military powers. Art. 4. Catalonia is declared [to be] under martial law. Art. 5. The Governor is charged with the administration of the police, justice and finances. He will nominate his own subordinates, and will make all necessary regulations. Art. 6. All revenues of the Province in ordinary or extraordinary levies will be assigned to the account of the Army.” Similar decrees were drawn up for the provinces of Aragon, Navarre, Biscaye, Salamanca, Leon, Toto, Zamora, Asturias, St. Ander, Burgos, Valladolid, and Placentia.

⁴¹ France had encouraged Catalan aspirations for independence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to weaken the Hapsburgs. This stopped when Philip V was placed on the Spanish throne by Louis XIV. In 1640, an independent Catalan Republic had in fact been created, but was soon reunited with Spain. Napoleon did everything he could to encourage Catalan separatism, including raising a regiment of local infantry. See Napoleon to Clarke. Feb. 8, 1812, no. 18487, in *Correspondance*, Vol. 23, 247; Dempsey, *Napoleon’s Mercenaries*, 228-9; and Eugène Fieffé. *Histoire des troupes étrangères au service de France depuis leurs origine jusqu’à nos jours*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Librairie Militaire, 1854), Vol. II, 147-9. My thanks to Ralph Reinertsen for referring me to this last source.

⁴² Napoleon to Berthier. February 8, 1810, no. 16230, in *Correspondance*, Vol. 20, 195.

⁴³ Sorel, V, 434-5; Haegle, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 404.

north had been annexed to erect a barrier between the *guerrilleros* and the Pyrénées, and that the goods and lands within the provinces would be used to meet army expenses until the insurgency was completely defeated.⁴⁴ Joseph's ministers had hoped that as more territory came under French control, more money would immediately flow to Madrid.⁴⁵ Instead they learned that the official French position was that the administration of the north had been changed to better erect a barrier between the *guerrilleros* and the Pyrénées; also, that the goods and lands within the provinces would be used to meet army expenses until the insurgency was completely defeated.⁴⁶ This also put an end to any hopes for negotiations with the resistance. Who after all would negotiate with a Spanish government that had allowed such an infringement of sovereignty? The subordinate position of the *Afrancesados* and Joseph was fully revealed. It was clear they could not restrain the French. Joseph's authority was very soon reduced to the immediate vicinity of Madrid.

Not surprisingly, Laforest was immediately bombarded with complaints from the king's ministers. These he had to placate. Remarkably, Laforest was still confident that he could do so.⁴⁷ Even more remarkably, he was right. Laforest persuaded the *Afrancesados* to remain at their posts. In one conversation with Minister Cabarrús, the latter asked how Spaniards could be expected to reconcile

⁴⁴ "Extract of a decision of H[is] I[mperial] M[ajesty] concerning the *Domaine Extraordinaire*." February 26, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 187-8.

⁴⁵ Azanza [Temporary Foreign Minister] to Champagny. February 26, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 185-6.

⁴⁶ "Extract of a decision of H[is] I[mperial] M[ajesty] concerning the *Domaine Extraordinaire*." February 26, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 187-8.

⁴⁷ Laforest to Champagny. March 4, 1810, in Laforest, III, 259: "Some evidently desire that the emperor [promise to respect] the [territorial] integrity of the kingdom. I have warned the new Spanish government, that the emperor might be forced in order to achieve his goals by taking [Spanish territory] as a security... I can be, as necessary, for or against [annexation]."

with Joseph when, “everywhere, submission has been imposed by force and not by choice.”⁴⁸ Laforest’s response was a brutal appeal to reality. The emperor’s decision, he said, was irrevocable and that the true enemy of Spain was the resistance, not France. He told him that the Spanish would have to accept things as they were, not as they would like them to be. After the war, all things would be made right.⁴⁹

Laforest knew that the *Afrancesados* were too closely tied to the French to break with them even after the decree. But when others pointed out that total military control would prevent the Madrid government from collecting taxes in the north at a time when the government needed all the money it could raise, Laforest responded in a still more conciliatory manner, claiming that the emperor’s actions were in all cases dictated by the “true” interests of Spain, which was the (very costly) pacification of the country.⁵⁰

Laforest was also able to convince the Spanish that the emperor would listen to his recommendations ameliorating conditions, although in reality imperial policy was largely inflexible. As a result, he continued to receive requests to write to this or that general about the increasingly frantic concerns of the central government. Without this naïve faith that Laforest could influence Napoleon’s generals, many *Afrancesados* would probably have resigned. Laforest’s ability to dissimulate served the empire well.

Even with northern Spain entirely cut off from Spanish administration, Napoleon expected the rest of Spain to pay an ever greater portion of French army expenses. In an attempt to appear generous,

⁴⁸ Laforest to Champagny. March 2, 1810, in Laforest, III, 246.

⁴⁹ Laforest to Cabarrús. March 10, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 253.

⁵⁰ Azanza to Laforest. March 8, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 229-32. The French clearly realized that the creation of more military governments would create additional expenses for Paris. Laforest to Azanza. March 23, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 309-10.

he promised that in return two million francs per month would be sent from France.⁵¹ It made little difference. In response, Cabarrús told Laforest that the Spanish government would have to pay as much as 150 million francs a year for military expenses. This could only be done, he continued, by the reorganization of the tax system, and the establishment of a more efficient administration. (Cabarrús also opined that limiting the French contribution to two million francs was unrealistic.) This claim, unfortunately for him, was belied by the inability of the Madrid government to properly manage its own finances even in the areas where it had full control.

Joseph, personally stung by the occupation, and realizing he had to do something in response struck back through decrees in April announcing the establishment of thirty-eight prefectures and fifteen military divisions under his control.⁵² (An additional decree took steps towards the convocation of a national Cortés, as promised in the Bayonne Constitution.⁵³ Laforest understood this as a clear challenge to French authority.⁵⁴ In the end, the new administrative divisions were never implemented, as Napoleon's generals simply refused to accept the jurisdiction of Joseph's officials outside a fifty-mile radius from Madrid.)

Joseph next attempted to negotiate a repeal of the Ebro decree, sending the Duke of Santa Fe to Paris in April 1810. After some hesitation, Joseph's representative was received first by Champagny and then by Napoleon himself. Arguments supporting the recognition of Joseph's control over all of French-occupied Spain fell on deaf ears. Laforest was instructed to carefully break the news to his Spanish collaborators:

You should start by explaining my feelings about the Convention of Bayonne.

⁵¹ Laforest to Champagny. February 16, 1810. Laforest III, 227.

⁵² Laforest to Champagny. May 3, 1810, in Laforest, III, 353-5.

⁵³ Laforest to Champagny. May 3, 1810, in Laforest, III, 355-6.

⁵⁴ Napoleon to Champagny. May 5, 1810, in Laforest, III, 366.

(i.e., that it was null and void due to the decision of some Spaniards to oppose the government) Then explain the importance of the Portuguese campaign and stress how much the Spanish affair is costing me. Give them time to reflect on that. Not until after four days should you let them know that I have required the left bank of the Ebro as an indemnity against everything that Spain has so far cost me. Do not be in a hurry.⁵⁵

In this way, the seizure of the north, at first explained as surety against future good behavior, now became payment for expenses already incurred. The Spanish delegation returned to Madrid with the depressing news that the emperor would neither reverse himself nor give Joseph any more authority over the French. This ended the temporary détente between Laforest and the king. Rumors that the emperor had also decreed the formation of new military governments in Burgos and Valladolid, well outside Catalonia, turned their relationship frigid. How Laforest was able to use both patience and charm to change this is our next subject.

Managing King Joseph

Napoleon had always insisted that satellites be treated roughly. Laforest was instructed to threaten the Madrid government with further military governments if there were any more protests, or if the insurgency was not promptly suppressed. Laforest could not do this, as it would have compromised his (frequently pretended) role as intercessor and mediator between loyal Spaniards and the rapacious emperor. He therefore chose to reject these instructions. He understood much better than Napoleon the value of persuasion to threats. Laforest chose to downplay rumors regarding additional military rule. He presented no ultimatum to the Spanish, which was a clear violation of orders. As the man on the scene, he understood how explosive the Spanish response could be, and chose a more conciliatory path.

As a result, Laforest's relationship with Joseph slowly improved through the rest of 1810. The

⁵⁵ Napoleon to Champagny. September 9, 1810, cited in Michael Glover. *Legacy of Glory: The Bonapartist Kingdom of Spain* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 178.

ambassador was once even invited to dine with him.⁵⁶ Joseph had good reason to try to make the ambassador an ally. Despite threats of abdication, he had begun to be genuinely concerned about his position in Spain. His brother Louis had been removed from the Netherlands only months earlier. Joseph feared he would be next.⁵⁷ In this famous dinner, the king began by discussing the depredations of the French generals, and requested that the French armies be directly placed under his command. He also spoke for the first time of his intent to travel to Paris to negotiate directly with his brother. The king also said how unhappy he was at his inability to control events or convince Paris to allow him to really govern Spain. He demanded the dismissal of the military governor of Madrid, and his replacement by the Spanish General Blaniac. On the principle that “no French troops should ever be under the command of a Spanish officer,” Napoleon would later refuse this request outright.⁵⁸ Joseph ended by speaking wistfully of his time in Naples, and of his desire to leave Spain if its sovereignty continued to be infringed. Laforest reminded Joseph that he was a prince of France, and as such must at all times remain obedient to the emperor as head of the imperial family. This was certainly not reassuring, but Joseph was sufficiently unsure of himself so as not to disagree.

The mercurial Joseph continued to vacillate between a determination to remain in Spain, and an equal determination to leave. Serious once again about abdication, Joseph told his wife in July of 1810 to buy a house near Paris.⁵⁹ Champagny, learning of this, instructed Laforest to tell Joseph his

⁵⁶ Laforest to Champagny. [Ciphred] December 17, 1810, in Laforest, IV, 298-302.

⁵⁷ For a discussion of these fears, see Haegeler, “La famille Impériale en 1810,” in *1810: Le tournant de l’Empire*, (Paris: Nouveau Monde Editions, 2010), 81-90.

⁵⁸ Glover, 195.

⁵⁹ See Joseph to Queen Julie. July 16, 1810, in Baron du Casse. *Les Rois frères de Napoléon Ier: Documents inédits relatifs au premier empire* (Paris: Librairie Germer Ballière et Cie, 1883), 37-8.

resignation would be regarded as desertion, and that he would not be welcome in France.⁶⁰ At the same time, Laforest was not to stand in his way if the king really was determined to leave.

As rumors began to circulate once more in 1811 that the king intended to resign, and that Napoleon would either become king himself or give the throne to another member of his family, many in the Madrid government actually hoped that the emperor would take the crown, believing in this way that the country might be kept intact.⁶¹ Some had even been so bold as to tell Laforest “they despaired for Spain if Napoleon did not put the crown on his [own] head.”⁶² (Vincent Haegele suggests that these rumors were spread by the ambassador himself in an attempt to manipulate court opinion.⁶³)

Napoleon had other plans. Joseph, originally seen by his brother as a stabilizing force in Iberia, had begun to become an impediment. With his brother gone, the emperor intended to leave Spain only the provinces of Castille, Andalusia, Valencia, La Mancha and Extramadura, thus dramatically reducing its population to between five and six million, and turning it into a second-rate power. The attitude of the *Afrancesados* towards Joseph, which had also vacillated in 1811, now began to become more positive. Unable to reverse the Ebro decree, the ineffectual king had at first seemed a liability. But as word came about Napoleon’s latest plans, the *Afrancesados* began to be truly afraid.⁶⁴ Joseph, weak as he was, seemed their last best hope. As Laforest reported, consternation was everywhere. He had previously noted that,

⁶⁰ Champagny to Laforest. Written on January 12, 1811, sent Jan. 18. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 685, fol. 48-51. Napoleon was having Joseph’s mail to Julie opened by the police, so it is probable that Champagny knew exactly what Joseph was doing. Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 437-8.

⁶¹ Laforest to Champagny. [Ciphred] February 6, 1811. Laforest, IV, 433-6.

⁶² Laforest to Champagny. [Ciphred] February 2, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 423.

⁶³ Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 365-6.

⁶⁴ Laforest to Champagny. February 26, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 487.

Confusion increases every day, and the ministers and the sovereign are becoming more and more disgusted with each other... palace intrigues abound, and estrange Joseph from his government...⁶⁵

Responding to the latest rumors, the king's ministers now begged Joseph to remain, saying that he alone could steer his brother to a more benevolent course.

Joseph, seemingly unmoved by this new show of loyalty, continued to make his plans. During a second dinner with Laforest, Joseph asked directly if his brother wanted him to abdicate.⁶⁶ Laforest had become used to this threat. But he was also aware of new dangers that lay behind it. Members of Joseph's Spanish court had been pressing him to begin negotiations with the rebels in Cadiz, and hoped that the king's threat of abdication would force Napoleon to support their plan (As Laforest knew, the emperor would never agree to this, and so would soon therefore try to separate the king from his compromising courtiers).

Words became heated, as the king complained of his continual mistreatment by French generals and officials. Laforest listened sympathetically. Playing on Joseph's weakness—his desire to please his brother, Laforest was at his best, eventually convincing him to remain a loyal subordinate. He even got Joseph to write a letter to Napoleon expressing his profound loyalty to the imperial system. He explicitly promised not only to accept all measures presently taken by the emperor, but all that might be imposed in the future.⁶⁷ More importantly, the king promised not to begin any negotiations with the insurgents. This was a major victory for Laforest, and a signal defeat for men like Miot de Melito, the king's aide, who had supported talks with Cadiz.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Laforest to Champangy. [Ciphred] January 24, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 391.

⁶⁶ Laforest to Champagny. February 4, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 427; and Laforest to Champagny. [Ciphred] February 9, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 439-45.

⁶⁷ Laforest to Champagny. [Ciphred] February 11, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 448-50.

⁶⁸ Miot de Melito later admitted as much. Miot de Melito, *Mémoires*, Vol. III, 176.

The ambassador also suggested the king try to economize on the expenses of the central provinces, cleverly redirecting Joseph's mind from Napoleon's demands, and towards realistic actions that could improve the situation of his own government. All this time, Laforest continued to boost the king's morale to ensure that he would remain in Spain. He was still at it at the end of the year. One meeting, in December 1811, is illustrative of the charm, conviction and chicanery Laforest used to manipulate the king.⁶⁹

As usual, Laforest evoked a vision of a better future. Military rule and extraordinary levies were only temporary, a result of the war. He reminded Joseph that the crown was worth all the travail that came with it. He also said he regretted the emperor could not give Joseph more of what he wanted. In a more practical vein, he pointed out (yet again) some of the Spanish government's own mistakes and defects.⁷⁰ (This narrative, sent by Laforest to Paris, is contradicted by Vincent Haegele, who asserts that the king was never swayed by the ambassador, but had merely used the repeated threat of resignation to extract concessions from his brother.⁷¹ However, this assertion is in turn contradicted by Miot de Melito, who believed Joseph's threat were real, and had been abandoned only after much persuasion.⁷²)

The secret to Laforest's successful manipulations of Joseph (and his ministers) was fivefold.

⁶⁹ Laforest to Bassano. December 23, 1811, in Laforest, V, 377-87. Hughes Bernard Maret, the duc de Bassano, had replaced Champagny as Foreign Minister in April 1811. He would in turn be replaced by Caulaincourt in November 1813. Jean Tulard, "Maret (Hughes-Bernard, duc de Bassano)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 271-2.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 383-4.

⁷¹ Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 413-4, 442. Haegele argues throughout his account of Joseph's time in Spain that the king did not genuinely intend to abdicate, except for a brief period in April 1811.

⁷² Miot de Melito's memoirs are of course suspect. Written after the fall of the empire, it was in his interest to claim Joseph's threats had been serious, and that he himself had played an important role in convincing the king to talk with the rebels, or abdicate. Miot de Melito, *Mémoires*, Vol. III, 175.

First, both king and ministers wanted to some extent to be deceived about the true intentions of the emperor. It was more comforting to believe that Napoleon meant well, and could be persuaded to change his policies, if only the right argument could be found. Second, Laforest acted subtly, preferring insinuations and blandishments over overt threats. Third, Laforest was a master of misdirection, skillfully redirecting the king's mind away from French exploitation to what he and his government could reasonably accomplish. Fourth, Laforest lied repeatedly and skillfully, as when he had claimed he did not know all that he in fact did about Napoleon's plans. Finally, he played on Joseph's emotions vis-à-vis his "august brother," often invoking his name to remind the king that he owed everything to him.

It is of course impossible to know what would have happened if Joseph had followed through on his threat to abdicate. It is certain even fewer Spaniards would have been willing to collaborate. His regime at least provided the appearance of a legitimate Spanish government, and its dissolution would have forced the French to take on the entire burden of governing Spain, which would have made their brutal conduct even more evident. It is also probable that many *Afrancesados* would have then gone over to the resistance.

It is possible that Joseph never genuinely planned to abdicate, and was merely trying to extort concessions from his brother. This seems unlikely, however, considering the preparations his wife made for their return to France. In the end, Joseph remained in Spain until he was chased out by Wellington in the spring of 1813.

When one considers Laforest's management of both Joseph and his court, the ambassador emerges as a figure of prime importance in the imperial system in Spain. But when sickness removed Laforest temporarily from the scene in autumn 1811, the question arose if the Madrid embassy would still be as effective as it had been under his direction.

The Spanish Embassy without Laforest

Laforest brought a superb set of skills in managing Spain's king and government. This was never clearer than when he became ill in October 1811. Increasingly overworked since his arrival in 1808, he was temporarily replaced by the embassy's First Secretary, Michault de Saint-Marc.⁷³ It was Saint-Marc who obtained a copy of the constitution being written by the Cadiz rebels. Unfortunately, the *Afrancesados* did not trust him the way they did Laforest, and he was unable to meet with them, or with Joseph.⁷⁴ By November, the ambassador had recovered, and soon resumed a full workload.⁷⁵

Laforest's illness revealed how important the ambassador's own personality was for the smooth functioning of the Napoleonic system. When he was sick, activity typical of his embassy was curtailed. No one could replace him in the manipulation of the Madrid government. Napoleon had also recognized Laforest's importance. His repeated requests for leave had always been refused.⁷⁶ His skills would never be more in need than when Catalonia was fully annexed in January 1812.

The Annexation of Catalonia

The news that all of Catalonia had been fully annexed by France and divided into four departments, came as another great shock to the *Afrancesados*. Despite the Ebro decree, they had long clung to the forlorn hope that the emperor would go no further. Napoleon had at last revealed himself. In so doing, he had also fulfilled French designs that dated back to the time of Richelieu.⁷⁷ Logically, the *Afrancesados* should have at last seen that France had no for respect Spain's sovereignty, and

⁷³ M. Cyprien-Philibert Michault de Saint-Marc to Bassano. October 4, 1811, in Laforest, V, 286-7.

⁷⁴ Saint-Marc to Bassano. October 7, 1811, in Laforest, V, 288.

⁷⁵ Laforest to Bassano. November 6, 1811, in Laforest, V, 310-5.

⁷⁶ See Laforest, VII.

⁷⁷ Laforest to Bassano. [Ciphred] February 17, 1812, Laforest, VI, 80.

abandon Joseph. Instead, they remained at their posts, in part because they had no place else to go, but also because Laforest persuaded them to do so. Following the annexation, he had had to expend a great deal of effort reassuring Joseph's ministers. All that the new French Foreign Minister, the Duc de Bassano, had told him was that "Catalonia has been for a long time governed by French military authorities, and H[is] M[ajesty]... judged it in the interests of the country to [regularize] that form of administration."⁷⁸ Laforest was soon assailed with questions about its precise nature. He could only distribute copies of Bassano's letter. This was of little comfort. He could only promise (falsely) that the annexation was a unique event that would not be repeated. He instructed France's consuls across Spain to do the same. Nonetheless, Laforest was obliged to report a considerable "malaise" in Madrid, although some "[still] patiently supported" the government.⁷⁹

Joseph himself demanded a written explanation from the emperor, as well as an assurance that he would go no further.⁸⁰ Napoleon in return finally gave him command of the imperial armies in Spain (although this was only because of his own upcoming invasion of Russia). Joseph, realizing this, said only that the transfer should have taken place earlier. Perhaps nervous about his southern flank, the emperor also authorized Joseph to attempt to at last convoke a national Cortés, and even to open negotiations with the rebels (Although meetings with representatives from various cities under French occupation took place, no national Cortés ever met during Joseph's reign).

Laforest's reports through July 1812 continued to focus on the hoped for Cortés, and also on military events, including the defeat of the Army of Portugal at Salamanca. The ambassador was

⁷⁸ Bassano to Laforest. February 14, 1812. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 688, fol. 132.

⁷⁹ Laforest to Bassano. February 21, 1812, [Parts ciphred] in Laforest, VI, 84-5.

⁸⁰ Laforest to Bassano. [Ciphred] March 9, 1812, in Laforest, VI, 116-8. Joseph's letter can be found in Santa Fe to Laforest. March 9, 1812. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 688, fol. 218-22.

subsequently forced to join the royal court's flight before Wellington's advance.⁸¹ Although the French armies were able to recapture the capital (Laforest returned there in February 1813), there was little for him to do in the last months of the Bonapartist kingdom.⁸² His correspondence was sporadic, in part because of the disruption to communications caused by guerilla attacks, and merely became reports about the capital or larger military events over which the French no longer had control. Laforest at last received permission in late April to return to France for a rest.⁸³ He was therefore not present for the last act of the Bonapartist regime, when Joseph's army was crushed by Wellington at the Battle of Vitoria. The ambassador would make a final, ironic appearance in the affairs of Spain, when he negotiated the Treaty of Valençay, allowing Ferdinand to return to Spain and claim the crown.⁸⁴ Laforest had thus been present at both the birth and death of Napoleonic control of Spain.

Conclusions

Laforest brought remarkable skill to the management of the Madrid government and its ruler. He was able, despite the central government's diminishing revenues, lack of authority, and territorial losses, to prevent Joseph's regime from dissolving, mostly by promising that the situation would improve in the

⁸¹ Laforest, VII, 4; and Laforest to Bassano. [Valence] Septemeber 1, 1812, in Laforest, VII, 4-11.

⁸² Laforest to Bassano. February 15, 1813, in Laforest, VII, 104-9.

⁸³ Laforest [Valladolid] to Bassano. April 30, 1813, in Laforest, VII, 160.

⁸⁴ Laforest's correspondence regarding the negotiations can be found in the AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 692-3. By the Treaty of Valençay, Ferdinand agreed to end the war with France and expel the Anglo-Portuguese army from Spain. Since the Cortés refused to allow Ferdinand to take the throne if he did not repudiate the treaty, it was never enforced. Wellington continued to operate from Spanish territory, invading southern France in early 1814. Whether or not Ferdinand would have adhered to the Treaty of Valencay without the actions of the Cortés is difficult to say. Interestingly, Ferdinand wrote a letter to Napoleon in November 1813, praising Laforest effusively. Ferdinand [at Valençay] to Napoleon. November 21, 1813. AAE. CP Espagne Supplément Vol. 20, fol. 366-7.

future. He was of course helped by the military successes that the French had experienced through early 1812, as well as the war itself, since he could promise that after final victory, and peace, conditions in Spain would improve. This promise was never realized, but by the time the military situation had turned against France, it had become almost too late for the *Afrancesados* to separate themselves from Joseph.⁸⁵ Still, the fact that the Madrid government did not resign *en masse* between 1810 and 1812 was in part a testament to Laforest's diplomatic talents.

Empires require officials able to manage the ruled, and to mediate between the imperial *metropole* and subordinate populations. Like Otto, Laforest executed this task with skill and perseverance. The effects of the Peninsular War on Spain meant that Laforest faced a daunting situation from the day he became ambassador. He was able with the assistance of the "French Party" he had created to keep the Madrid government within the subordinate framework he considered ideal for Spain. The proof of his centrality to the imperial project was that when he was laid low by sickness, the effectiveness of his embassy was considerably reduced.

The urgency with which Laforest had to periodically convince the *Afrancesados* and Joseph to accept infringement by Paris on their country's sovereignty makes Spain a special case within the Napoleonic Empire. Compared to Otto, Laforest also had a much more contentious relationship with his collaborators, whether it was Joseph, or the *Afrancesados*. Exploitation was much more intense. The sovereignty of the government was not respected. In addition to this, the annexation of the north made many *Afrancesados* fearful that they were slowly losing their country. What prevented the Madrid government from resigning, or defecting to the resistance, was Laforest's skill. A fifteenth-century English diplomat described an ambassador as "an honest man sent abroad to lie for the good of his

⁸⁵ More than 3,000 *Afrancesados* ultimately preferred to go into exile rather than remain in Spain. Fear of reprisals was probably the most important factor in this decision.

country.”⁸⁶ Laforest’s ability in this regard served his country well. Deception in the present, and promises of vastly better conditions in the future, allowed him to bind Spanish collaborators to the system, despite trying moments.

If Otto’s embassy in Bavaria represented what could be done with a cooperative satellite government, Laforest’s embassy shows how an imperial ambassador could cajole some very suspicious elites into passively accepting its subordination to the Napoleonic Empire. Without Laforest, the *Afrancesados* would probably have abandoned Joseph, something the king never acknowledged. Chapter Eight will explore how the ambassador’s authority was used to enforce the economic exploitation of Spain.

⁸⁶ This is usually attributed to the English diplomat and writer Sir Henry Wotton.

Chapter Eight: The Spanish Embassy and the Economic Exploitation of Spain

While Laforest spent a considerable amount of time managing the Madrid government, the French exploitation of Spain's resources remained his primary task. As in Bavaria, Madrid's financial difficulties had no effect on the determination of the French to extract as much money as necessary to pay for the increasingly expensive Peninsular War. By 1811 Napoleon's Finance Minister estimated that the first two years alone had cost 220 million francs.¹ This troubled Napoleon, who had been able to turn a profit on the campaigns of 1805-7. Yet even these financial problems paled in comparison with those Madrid, problems which became so severe that the emperor was eventually forced to extend a monthly subsidy to Joseph just to keep it afloat.

As one might expect, the Continental System played a role in this exploitation. Following the lead of Otto and other diplomats across the empire, Laforest sought additional commercial advantages for France through a treaty of commerce. While he might have tried to expand Franco-Spanish trade for the benefit of both sides, he failed, due to the insistence of the French government on adherence to Napoleon's mercantilist principles. Laforest's involvement in the expropriation of Spain's art treasures was yet another important task. This chapter begins by describing the efforts of Joseph's government to overcome its financial problems, the ambassador's role in these efforts, and how they failed.

The Finances of the Bonapartist Kingdom

Napoleon had expected to achieve a financial windfall from the Spanish invasion. He

¹ Gabriel Girod de l'Ain. *Joseph Bonaparte, le roi malgré lui* (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 1970), 266.

had assumed that Spain would serve as France's other conquests had done since the beginning of the Revolutionary Wars—a country that (along with its American colonies) could be exploited to enrich the *metropole*. Although the Bourbons had left the Spanish treasury with enormous debts when they abdicated in 1808, this did not prevent Napoleon from instructing Laforest to make the Spanish pay the costs of the Peninsular War. The importance of Spanish finances to the ambassador is clear from his frequent references to them. His reports also provide a detailed account as to why Madrid was ultimately unable to improve them. This failure was one of the most important reasons for the chronic weakness of Joseph's regime. Laforest had been aware of Madrid's problem, ever since he had visited the Spanish treasury in order to make a detailed report. However, his activities went beyond simple information gathering. Like Otto, he soon began to play a role in obtaining desperately needed foreign loans. As early as July 1808, the ambassador was requesting authority to secure these, since:

...it is highly important that the king does not enter Madrid with empty pockets... The military and civilian personnel [of the government] have not been paid for six to eight months, [and] I do not see how the king will be able to begin his reign successfully, if he is not assured of a considerable loan.²

The chief reason for the financial situation was not just the huge Bourbon debt, although this always remained a significant impediment to the government's ability to operate properly, or implement reforms. The problems were compounded by the arrearages in the subsidy payments owed to France under the Treaty of San Ildefonso. Napoleon insisted all of this be paid before any other obligation of the Spanish state was honored.³ The Madrid government in response

² Laforest to Champagny. July 3, 1808, in Laforest, I, 137.

³ Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 55-6. The Spanish had already paid forty-eight million francs to the French Empire in 1803. By 1804, they had begun to fall behind in their payments even before the resumption of war with Britain closed off Spain from American silver. The failure of the Spanish treasury to meet its obligations,

requested the debt be forgiven.⁴ This was quickly refused. As a result, Joseph, as Max Joseph would be forced to do in 1809, was obliged to take extraordinary steps to raise money. (He had previously had to order that local commerce be conducted in French francs, a clear sign the country was suffering from a serious lack of coinage. This was remarkable, considering Spain's historic role as the primary source of specie for the rest of Europe.)⁵ Joseph imposed additional taxes on landowners in the provinces under French occupation, levied an eight percent tax on certain staple goods, and floated a special loan secured with the sale of ecclesiastical lands.⁶ In October 1808, yet another forced loan was levied on the provinces of northern Spain.⁷

In theory, the money the armies collected in Spain was to be used to pay for requisitions. Community leaders were to be given receipts that would be redeemed by the Madrid government. This was supposed to ameliorate the exploitation of village populations. In addition, municipalities were ordered to furnish their own soldiers to patrol the major roads, and to build armories to supply the imperial armies so as to reduce the direct financial burden on the

combined with speculation by the banker Ouvrard would lead to a run on the Bank of France in the last months of 1805. Ouvrard's scheme ultimately cost Spain around sixty million francs.

⁴ Cortada, 72.

⁵ *Prontuario de las leyes y decretos del Rey Nuestro Señor Don José Napoléon desde el año de 1808*, 3 Vols. (Madrid: de Orden Superior a la Imprenta Real, 1810), Vol. I, 49, cited in Cortada, 82.

⁶ Laforest [Vitoria] to Champagne. August 24, 1808, in Laforest, I, 237-9; Cortada, 65; and Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 68-9. The tax applied to the provinces of Castille, Leon, Navarre, Alava, and Guipúzcoa, and was assessed on wheat, oats, straw, peas, kidney beans, wine, oil, sheep, cows, and pigs. The extraordinary tax on landowners was to last until March 1, 1809.

⁷ This was a forced loan of six million *reales* imposed on the province of Alava, with an additional six million on Guipúzcoa, fourteen million on Navarre. There was also a 100 million *reale* tax on ecclesiastical property. Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 69.

larger towns.

Joseph's task of making his government solvent was clearly daunting. Laforest carefully followed his efforts to reorganize the treasury. Among the first of these was the use of the crown jewels as collateral for a 100 million *reale* loan used to balance the budget.⁸ Yet even this was mired in the corruption that was then endemic in Spain. When later asked by Champagny (on direct orders from Napoleon) in 1810 to look into what had happened to the jewels in order to seize them for the unpaid debt, Laforest discovered that some had been stolen by Murat, others taken by Joseph, and the rest purloined by others.⁹ He was shocked to learn that the famous *Peregrina* pearl, reputedly the largest in the world, was still in the queen's possession.¹⁰ Unfortunately, he could not obtain hard evidence to prove it. (Joseph would later take some of the jewels when he went into exile in America, before depositing the rest in English and Dutch banks.)¹¹

⁸ Laforest to Champagny. July 1, 1808, in Laforest I, 129-30. Laforest assessed the value of the remaining jewels as being considerably less than the 100 million *reales* (twenty-five million francs), that was settled on for the loan. Less than seven million francs was ultimately repaid by the Madrid government. Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, 243.

⁹ For some interesting materials regarding Laforest's search for the crown jewels, see "Appendix II: les diamants de la couronne d'Espagne," in Laforest, V, 404-11; along with several of Laforest's letters for the months of June and July 1808, in Laforest, Vol. I.

¹⁰ Laforest to Bassano. September 22, 1811, in Laforest, V, 266. The Bourbons were unable after the collapse of the Bonapartist kingdom to reclaim the *Peregrina*, which may have come into the hands of Louis Napoleon (the future Napoleon III). After passing through various private collections, the *Peregrina* was purchased by Richard Burton for Elizabeth Taylor in 1969. Footnote 1, in Girod de l'Ain, 267.

¹¹ Girod de l'Ain, 272. Patricia Stroud reports that in summer 1836, Helen Berkley, while visiting Joseph in his mansion in Point Breeze, New Jersey, was shown a glittering collection of jewelry, including "Several clusters

Laforest, the energetic proconsul, was soon after obliged to play a central role in securing an additional thirty million *reale* loan, this time from the Dutch. It would be among the first of many.¹² Yet even with the ambassador's help, it could only be had at fifteen percent.¹³ Laforest played an equally important role in obtaining a number of smaller loans from banks in Madrid.¹⁴ These included one for 1.5 million francs, all of which was immediately sent to the French treasury to pay the promised subsidy.¹⁵ (Laforest had been very anxious to secure these, since they had the double benefit of supporting the Madrid government, while providing benefits for France.) In this case, as in so many, Laforest, while helping Joseph's regime, was also helping his imperial master.

It was not until the middle of 1809 that Spain's Finance Minister Cabarrús finally decided to take action in dealing seriously with the debt crisis. Although default had already been

[that] looked like the jewel-encrusted handles of swords and daggers," and "others like portions of crowns broken off." These were undoubtedly the remnants of the crown jewels. Helen Berkley, "A Sketch of Joseph Bonaparte," in *Godey's Lady's Book* (April 1845), 187, cited in Stroud, 182.

¹² Laforest to Champagny. May 21, 1809, in Laforest, II, 255.

¹³ *Ibid.*; and Champagny to Laforest. March 4, 1809. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 678, fol. 228-9.

¹⁴ Laforest to Champagny. August 23, 1808, in Laforest, I, 228-9; Haegele, *Napoleon et Joseph*, 383-4; Laforest to Champagny. July 19, 1809, in Laforest, II, 339-41; Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, 244. Several were from Charles Joseph Baguenalt de Puchesse (1758-1817), who had previously been Joseph's private banker, and head of the Banque Baguenalt et compagnie, founded during the Directory. The bank remained one of the larger private institutions through the Restoration era. Zylberberg, 461, 512-4.

¹⁵ Champagny to Laforest. September 17, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 676, fol. 319-20; Champagny to Laforest. October 22, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 677, fol. 105; Champagny to Laforest. October 26, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 677, fol. 127-8; Laforest to Champagny. July 28, 1808, in Laforest, I, 192-3; Napoleon [Auch] to Joseph. July 24, 1808, in Haegele, *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 543.

suggested by his ministers, Joseph insisted on honoring all claims, believing this would strengthen the legitimacy of his government, while also convincing foreign and domestic creditors to advance more money. The government thus proposed selling Church property to generate more than eleven billion *reales*. This would have paid the entire Bourbon debt, as well as the entire state budget for four years in advance. Unfortunately, this soon proved to be unfeasible. The Finance Minister next decided to help amortize the 7.2 billion *reales* of debt by issuing 2 billion worth of so-called *cédulas hipotecarias*. (Cabarrús claimed this would eliminate 155.6 million *reales* in interest (and 63.9 million in lifetime annuities) that the government was obliged to pay.)¹⁶ These *cédulas* were mortgage notes similar to the *vales reales* that had been used by the Bourbons, only now backed by some confiscated Church or rebel property. Creditors of the old regime could exchange their old *vales reales* for these *cédulas*.¹⁷ The model for this was of course the French *biens nationaux*, confiscated Church lands that had been used by the Republic to pay the debts of *ancien regime*. Tellingly, the *cédulas* were issued in large denominations.¹⁸

Unfortunately, they were undermined from the start by the Madrid government itself, which could not resist printing ever more. Even before they were issued, the king had also decided to give some as gifts to members of the government and court.¹⁹ The chief problem was

¹⁶ Magescas, “Le gouvernement central,” 151.

¹⁷ *Prontuario*, I, 200; Magescas, “Le gouvernement central,” 155.

¹⁸ *Prontuario*, I, 260.

¹⁹ According to Laforest, the comte de Montarco, the duc de Cotadilla, and the duc de Sorrentino-Salinas each received *cédulas* worth one million, Azanza and the Minister of the Marine, Admiral Mazarredo 300,000 each, O’Farrill and Urquijo, 200,000 each, Cabarrús, 160,000, with 120,000 being given to Arribas, and two million to Campo-Alange. Nor would this be the last time Joseph used the *cédulas* in this way. In November 1809 each

that many Spaniards were reluctant to accept the notes. They feared that if the French were defeated, the property would be repossessed by its original owners, and the debased currency rendered entirely worthless. Since the government insisted on selling the *cedulas* for hard currency already in circulation, there were never many buyers.²⁰ The Madrid government then tried to use them as collateral for additional loans.²¹ This just drove down the value of the *cedulas* even further, as both Spaniards and foreign lenders became increasingly worried about the good faith and stability of the Madrid government.

As government finances continued to deteriorate, the *cedulas* were increasingly used in lieu of cash to pay the salaries of government officials, the only group obliged to take them. This only embittered many civil servants. As still more continued to be printed, their value fell precipitously. By August 1811, Laforest could report they were at twenty percent of their original value.²²

Although the *cedulas* could not save the finances of the Madrid government, they did in some way continue the economic transformation of Spanish agriculture begun through the disentanglement of Church lands. Together with the sale of the *Vales Reales* that had begun in 1798, more than 1.5 billion *reales* in property was opened to public sale, a significant first step in the commercialization of farming.²³ This was so useful that the Cortés of Cadiz would issue its

member of the Council of State received 500,000 *reales* in *cedulas*, and each minister, one million. Laforest to Champagny. September 11, 1809, in Laforest, II, 422; Laforest to Champagny. November 3, 1809, in Laforest, III, 60.

²⁰ Cortada, 175.

²¹ *Prontuario*, I, 397.

²² They later rebounded to thirty-eight percent. Laforest to Bassano. August 25, 1811, in Laforest, V, 205.

²³ "Table 3.1: Value of properties disentailed during the nineteenth century (in million *reales*)," in Tortella

own decree validating this disentanglement.²⁴ Although these sales were excoriated after Ferdinand's conservative *coup d'état* in May 1814, even he chose not to return the land. (Still, it would not be until 1836 after the Carlist Wars and Ferdinand's death, that the process of disentanglement was resumed, affecting an additional 3.4 billion *reales* of church lands.)²⁵

Government finances were further hindered by the laissez-faire economic policies that Cabarrús introduced. The ending of lucrative government monopolies on playing cards, brandy, liquor, perfume, sealing wax and tobacco cost the regime an estimated 100 million *reales* per year.²⁶ Royal manufactories making china and crystal were closed, and government textile factories sold to private owners. It is hard to imagine a more inappropriate policy at a time when the government was desperate for money. All this contributed to the steadily increasing deficit.²⁷

Casares, 55.

²⁴ The Cortes also supported the end of manorial rights, the implementation of land reform and the suppression of the guilds. Vives, 609-10.

²⁵ "Table 3.1: Value of properties disentailed during the nineteenth century (in million *reales*)," in Tortella Casares, 55.

²⁶ *Prontuario*, I, 243; Cortada, 220-1.

²⁷ The Madrid government's budget for the month of September 1809 (the only budget for which we have a full table for both revenues and expenses), shows how large the government's deficit had grown, even at that early stage. It lists 12,710,920 *reales* in revenues and 15,139,425 *reales* in expenses. Of the revenues, only 12.1 percent came from taxes and contributions, with 11.8 percent coming from the *biens nationaux* and sequestered properties, 8.7 percent in credits from various provinces. 29.5 percent and 14.2 percent of revenues from the *Hôtel des monnaies* and the *Caisse de consolidation* respectively, and 23.7 percent of revenues from a series of loans (the largest from the city of Bayonne). The Ministry of War swallowed up most of the expenses (62.9 percent), with the Ministry of Finances second (20.4 percent). After subtracting 8.9 percent for royal gifts to courtiers and others, there remained only 7.8 percent for the remaining ministries. "Tableau 17: Budget de septembre 1809 (en réaux)," in Magescas, "Le Gouvernement Central," 160-1.

The financial problems of the Madrid government were reflected in its 1809 and 1810 budgets. Xavier Magescas provides a detailed account of these. Based on figures drawn from earlier budgets, Finance Minister Cabarrús had estimated expenses for 1810 to total 930 million *reales*, including 240 million for the War Ministry.²⁸ Expected revenues included 180 million from the *cedulas*, 152 million from customs taxes, 90.6 million from individual payments, 411.5 million from an eight percent tax on some staples, 69.4 million from a six percent tax on certain industries, and 4.5 million from a national lottery.²⁹ These hopes were largely fanciful. Little of Cabarrús' projected revenue was ever collected, and the Madrid government continued to be faced with severe shortfalls. At the same time, the almost 178 million *reales* needed to pay the interest on the public debt was very real. This represented almost twenty percent of the budget. It is not surprising then that under these circumstances Joseph's regime amassed an enormous deficit between 1808 and 1811.³⁰ By that time, the Madrid government was essentially bankrupt, unable to pay even the monthly salaries of its employees. Even when government expenses were reduced, revenues dropped faster, especially after local rebels and Wellington began to occupy more provinces in 1812.

In addition to all its other problems, the actions of the French armies severely restricted the Madrid government's ability to collect taxes. Since the days of the Revolution, the French

²⁸ Laforest to Champagny. December 17, 1809, in Laforest, III, 133; "Report of the Minister of Finances to His Catholic Majesty [King Joseph Napoleon]." AAE. CP Espagne, Vol. 680, fol. 281-90. A large part of the budget (264 million) also went to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs to pension off clergy who had been forcibly retired by the dissolution of religious orders.

²⁹ "Table of the Report of the Minister of Finances." AAE. CP Espagne, Vol. 680, fol. 292-3.

³⁰ 40.97 percent of the deficit was due to the expenses of the War Ministry, 26.94 percent to the Finance Ministry, and 17.01 percent to the Interior Ministry.

had used massive requisitioning and forced contributions in all the territories they occupied. Although Spain, an already economically depressed country, could not provide as much money and manpower as Italy and Germany, this did not stop them from engaging in the systematic expropriation of food, money, and other goods. Napoleon's generals were so rapacious there was frequently little left for the Spanish tax collectors to take.³¹ Joseph in this regard would later singled out General Christophe Merlin for particular censure.³² (Wanting to be loved as well as paid, Joseph demanded that the fine of two million *reales* which the general had levied on one town be reduced to 200,000. The king then used the money for a relief fund for the town, which had been pillaged by Merlin's soldiers.)³³ Marshal Soult, operating in Andalusia, was at least as bad; he has been characterized by at least one modern historian as a "world class plunderer."³⁴

The extent of this is again suggested by Marshal Suchet's report regarding the provinces under his control.³⁵ Between 1808 and 1813, he took more than 285.7 million *reales* in cash and kind from the provinces of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia.³⁶ Suchet could thus pay all the

³¹ Cortada, 51.

³² This did not prevent General Merlin, who had followed Joseph to Spain from Naples, from later serving as Captain-General in command the Spanish Royal Guard. "Merlin (Christophe-Antoine, comte)," in Georges Six. *Dictionnaire biographique des généraux & amiraux Français de la Révolution et de l'Empire (1792-1814)*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Librairie Historique et Nobiliaire, 1934), II, 183-4.

³³ Laforest [Vitoria] to Champagny. August 20, 1808, in Laforest, I, 223.

³⁴ Michael Glover, *The Peninsular War, 1807-1814* (London: Penguin, 2001) 39

³⁵ Charles Esdaile reports that General Pierre Thouvenot managed to extract forty million reales from the Basque provinces over the course of only eighteen months. Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, 231.

³⁶ Suchet was the only French general in the Peninsular War to keep such detailed records. The true figures may even be higher. The figures should in any event be increased by fifty to one hundred percent to account for payments in kind. Jean-Louis Reynaud. *Contre-guerilla en Espagne (1808-1814). Suchet pacifie l'Aragon* (Paris:

expenses of both his armies and administration, and still have more than seventy million *reales* at the beginning of 1814.

While Suchet left little for Spanish taxes, he was in other ways remarkably enlightened in his treatment of the local population. As such, his administration is a unique example of what could have been achieved in Spain. It also helps highlight how deficient Napoleon's other senior commanders were. More intelligently than the rest, Suchet was able to acquire much through taxation, rather than plunder. Ironically, it was his reinstating of the Bourbon taxes, fairly administered, that allowed the successful pacification of his provinces. Since he actually used the revenues collected to pay and feed his own troops, they rarely stole. A clever administrator, his conciliatory policies, including amnesty for all who had fought the French, the use of army supplies to feed the locals, and the abolition of the higher taxes levied by the local junta, caused Catalans and Aragonese to rally to his rule.³⁷ They soon returned to their homes and restored the local economy, thus further increasing the tax base. Because Suchet paid for his requisitions in cash, merchants were eager to supply his armies. It is certainly true that Suchet did have a significant advantage over the other generals in Spain in having Catalonia, Spain's most prosperous province, under his rule. Still, his policies brought him great benefits

Most remarkably, the local populace who had rallied to him were also began to fight the *guerrilleros*.³⁸ As Napoleon later said: "If I had had two marshals like Suchet, not only would I

Economica, 1992), 88. The original figures can be seen in Suchet's memoirs. Louis-Gabriel Suchet. *Mémoires du maréchal Suchet, duc d'Albufera sur les campagnes en Espagne depuis 1808 jusqu'à 1814: écrits par lui-même*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Anselin, 1834) Vol. II, 481-2.

³⁷ Suchet, I, 281-2.

³⁸ Suchet was able to raise four companies of fusiliers and two companies of gendarmes in Aragon, as well as a substantial police force for the city of Saragossa, which had put up such stern resistance in 1808-9. There were

have conquered the peninsula, I would have also preserved that conquest. His conciliatory and administrative [ability], [combined with] his military skill and bravery, won him remarkable success. It is unfortunate that sovereigns cannot create men such as him.”³⁹ Nothing could be more revealing of the utter lack of scruples of Napoleon’s other commanders, or the damage they did to the Bonapartist kingdom.

The expenditures of Joseph’s government were another problem. The largest share was devoted to the War Ministry. This fluctuated between sixty-two and sixty-five percent between 1809 and 1814. Remarkably, almost half went to the seven regiments of the Royal Guard (which included a useless regiment of halberdiers), and the other half to twenty-five native and foreign regiments of the regular army.⁴⁰ Laforest rightly considered most of this an extravagance. Joseph however was convinced that a large army was necessary to legitimate his rule, as well as being a means of rallying Spaniards to him. It was also the only military force in Spain over which he had complete control.

Joseph’s extravagant civil list was another major expense, absorbing almost ten percent of the budget.⁴¹ Expensive formal reviews and balls at the many Bourbon palaces dominated

also many cases of locals providing intelligence on the movements of the *guerrilleros*, and even of villages protecting isolated French soldiers from them. Suchet, I, 310, 316.

³⁹ Napoleon’s conversation with Madame de Campan is cited in Suchet, I, xliv.

⁴⁰ See “Tableau 15: Effectifs des troupes royales au 1er octobre 1809,” and “Tableau 16: Corps formés par Joseph entre 1810 et 1811,” in Magescas, “Le gouvernement central,” 158-60. Otto von Pivka claims there were only seven line infantry regiments raised by Joseph. Otto von Pivka. *Spanish Armies of the Napoleonic Wars* (London: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 1975), 27-30. In October 1809, those troops amounted to 3,412 men in the Royal Guard, and 3,522 men in the regular regiments. By January 1811, there were 4,000-4,500 in the Royal Guard, with 5,687 regulars. Laforest to Champagny. January 11, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 360-1.

⁴¹ Laforest’s correspondence of February 21, 1811 gives the figure of 1,380,000 reales (or 9.6 percent) for

court life.⁴² The frivolous king spent additional money on a museum near Seville to house the papers of Christopher Columbus and Pizarro, and also to restore “Italica,” the ancient birthplace of Roman Emperors Trajan, Hadrian, and Theodosius.⁴³

With most of the government’s money going to the army and the king’s household, hardly more than twenty percent was left for administration and official salaries.⁴⁴ In order to prevent a complete financial debacle, Napoleon by 1811 had decided to provide the Spanish government with a 500,000 franc monthly subsidy.⁴⁵ This was soon raised to one million, since it was also supposed to pay for the Army of the Center, which had been placed under the king’s authority. Even so, payments from Paris, which were in any case never made regularly, were hardly enough to provide any real solution to the government’s problems.

Because of the subsidies, Laforest was allowed for the first time to sit in on the meetings of the Council of State when financial problems were discussed.⁴⁶ He was therefore better placed than ever to obtain detailed information on the many aspects of Joseph’s government.⁴⁷

By carefully monitoring French payments, he could at least ensure that some of the money was spent properly. Laforest appears to have been almost modern in his insistence on

the civil list out of total expenses of 14,308,870 in the budget beginning January 1811. Laforest to Champagny. February 21, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 475.

⁴² An interesting description of Joseph’s court can be found in Philip Mansel. *The Eagle in Splendour: Napoleon I and his Court* (London: George Philip, 1987), 142-8.

⁴³ Haegele, *Napoléon et Joseph*, 394. Joseph thought such projects would win the hearts of “his” Spaniards by celebrating their glorious past.

⁴⁴ Laforest to Bassano. May 21, 1811, in Laforest, V, 68.

⁴⁵ Laforest to Bassano. May 2, 1811, in Laforest, V, 46.

⁴⁶ Laforest to Bassano. June 22, 1811, in Laforest, V, 106.

⁴⁷ Laforest to Bassano. June 18, 1811 in Laforest, V, 101.

transparency. Ultimately, however, this merely meant that Laforest was able to provide the Foreign Ministry with a full accounting of the mismanagement by the Madrid government.

He was more active, and successful, in imposing, and enforcing the same kind of unfair trade policies that Otto had introduced in Bavaria. This was most clearly revealed in his negotiations of the 1809 Franco-Spanish commercial agreement.

Unfree and Unfair Trade: Laforest and the Commercial Exploitation of Spain

Laforest had begun as early as December 1808 to work on a commercial treaty with Spain that would take advantage of the power imbalance between the two countries. Sensitive as usual to the practical limits of exploitation, he was careful not to make it so one-sided that the Spaniards would refuse to sign. Nor surprisingly, this aroused Napoleon's displeasure.⁴⁸ (The emperor planned to ride roughshod over Spain's commercial rights. Conceived by him as a colony, the country was to provide raw materials that could be used to manufacture value-added French products for re-export.⁴⁹ He was also interested in trading directly with Spain's colonial empire, as they had lost most of their own. Most importantly, the emperor saw the Spanish Americas as territory from which the Royal Navy's control of the seas could be contested.)

Laforest had been instructed to open the Spanish market as much as possible to French goods. Spain, as noted previously, had always been important for the French economy. It had become especially so during the revolutionary wars. The French now believed that in Spain's backward economy French goods would do even better if barriers to trade were lowered and

⁴⁸ He complained that the proposed tariffs might cause the franc to depreciate against the *reale*. Napoleon to Champagny. June 25, 1809, no. 14099, in *Correspondance*, Vol. 17, 358.

⁴⁹ France was especially interested in opening Spain to French textiles. See Jones, "Fear and Domination," 29-35; and "Riel de Beurnonville (Pierre, marquis)," in Henri-Robert, 301.

English goods driven out.⁵⁰ Various French governments had sought an advantageous commercial treaty for decades.⁵¹ General Riel de Beurnonville, Laforest's predecessor, had complained that "[the Spanish] skin French citizens with impunity" and "create retroactive prohibitive regulations," leading to the unfair confiscation of French goods by the Spanish.⁵² He also reported to the First Consul, as Napoleon then was, that "[French merchants] protest and expect the protection from you they deserve." This at first was not easy to achieve. Since the eighteenth century, the Spanish had refused to bow to French pressure.⁵³ With a new satellite government in Madrid, and much of the country under occupation, Laforest was sure this situation would now change.

He first turned his attention to the wool trade. Wool from Merino sheep had always been particularly prized. Spanish domination of the wool trade during the eighteenth century had helped to significantly reduce the country's trade deficit with the rest of Europe. It had also provided important tax revenues.⁵⁴ Prior to the Peninsular War, no one had been able to compete

⁵⁰ For a discussion of Anglo-French commercial competition in Spain's colonies, see Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 422-9. For a discussion of the historiography and debates surrounding the economic backwardness of Spain in the eighteenth century, see Zylberberg, 3-23.

⁵¹ Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 397-402.

⁵² AN, AFIII, 1679, cited in Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 413. The date of this report is unclear, but it must have been written before May 1804, since it refers to Napoleon as "First Consul."

⁵³ Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 410-3.

⁵⁴ England alone imported 6.2 million pounds of Spanish wool per year for the years 1802-4, ninety-two percent of its imported wool for the period. Lasteyrie de Saillant estimated that the revenue from wool exports alone had accounted for approximately twenty-eight million *reales* in excise taxes to the Spanish government per year during the later part of the eighteenth century. Carla Rahn Phillips and William D. Phillips. *Spain's Golden Fleece: Wool Production and the Wool Trade from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: The Johns

with it. It is not surprising therefore then that the Madrid government tried to maintain Spain's merino monopoly, or that the French tried to end it.⁵⁵

Laforest's greatest coup was the clause in the 1810 agreement he negotiated that allowed the removal of 8-9,000 Spanish sheep to France, supposedly to keep them safe from *guerrilleros*.⁵⁶ While this gave the appearance of French cooperation with Madrid to protect the Spanish wool industry, it in fact led to the creation of large French merino flocks that brought Spain's monopoly to an end.⁵⁷

This was only one of the ways in which the Peninsular War seriously damaged the industry. Spain's great flocks were reduced from approximately five million to 2.75 million in the decade after 1808.⁵⁸ In addition to France, England and several other countries were by the 1820s able to establish their own large merino flocks. As early as 1811, Spain's share had

Hopkins University Press, 1997), 271-2.

⁵⁵ Emblematic of this struggle was a small but significant dispute in 1808 over Spanish wool that had been confiscated at Bayonne on the emperor's orders. With Joseph and the French armies pushed back to Burgos by the resistance, merino wool was at that moment one of the few remaining sources of revenue for the crown. Napoleon wanted to sell the wool to support his armies. Joseph, on the other hand, insisted that the wool be returned. Joseph, as usual, lost. See: Laforest to Champagny. November 28, 1808, in Laforest, I, 377; Joseph to Napoleon. November 20, 1808, in Haegeler, *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 605; Cortada, 111; Laforest to Champagny. March 8, 1809; and May 9, 1809, in Laforest, II, 115, 248.

⁵⁶ Champagny (Fontainebleu) to Larforest. October 2, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 684, fol. 3. Flocks had in fact been crossing into France unofficially since the beginning of the war, since the *guerilleros* never attacked across the border.

⁵⁷ Champagny (Fontainebleu) to Minister of the Interior. October 1, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 684, fol. 1.

⁵⁸ "Table A1.1: Estimates of Sheep and Wool Production" in Phillips, 294.

dropped to only forty-six percent of England's merino consumption.⁵⁹ (The value of French imports of Spanish wool fell by 1826 to only half of the value for the period 1787-9.) Although the war itself was an important reason for these changes, the signal fact remains that Laforest had played a central role in the creation of a French merino industry.

The ambassador next focused his attention on expanding France's cotton exports. Spain had been an important market for French textiles since the eighteenth century, and cotton had long been one of the areas in which the Ministry of Manufactures and Commerce was most interested.⁶⁰ Knowing that Spain's cotton industry was far inferior to that of France, Laforest believed French manufactures would have great success in that market.⁶¹ There were however several serious impediments. French industry could not expand without raw cotton imports. Unfortunately, this was in short supply, both because of the Continental System, and the British blockade.⁶² French manufacturers therefore supported low tariffs on raw cotton imports no

⁵⁹ Phillips, 271.

⁶⁰ Robert B. Holtman, *The Napoleonic Revolution* (New York: J. B. Lippincourt Co., 1967), 113-4. As Zylberberg notes "Spain and its empire remained the principal destination for France's textile industry which was the most important of France's industries." See Zylberberg, 545.

⁶¹ In 1794, Diego de Gardoqui had presented a plan to Manuel Godoy to set up several royal cotton manufactories, but Godoy rejected it. As for French merchants, they were so anxious to increase sales in Spain, as well as to avoid Spanish tariffs, they had even built several factories there as early as 1795. One, opened in Catalonia in 1799, was copied from a large Toulouse, had 3,440 spindles. This and other French plants, which relied on both steam and water power, prefigured Spain's own later industrial revolution. This does not contradict the fact that France's merchant networks sought to delay Spain's economic development. See Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 63-4; and Zylberberg, 490-6.

⁶² Napoleon also sought to encourage cotton manufacturers to switch to other materials through financial incentives. Holtman, *The Napoleonic Revolution*, 114-5.

matter what the source.

Opening France to Spain's overseas raw cotton could have facilitated increased sales of French cloth in Spain and its colonies. This would have filled a need that in theory should have benefited merchants and consumers in both countries. (The Spanish and French treasuries would also have profited from increased excise taxes.) At the same time, France's dominant position in the Spanish economy would have been strengthened.

The chief obstacle was Napoleon's stubborn opposition to raw cotton imports. (Since England's enormous cotton industry was the most important target of the Continental System, cotton had always been of particular interest to Napoleon.)⁶³ Always fearful of loopholes in the Continental System that might benefit Britain in any way, and suspicious of the origin of the cotton coming through Spain, Napoleon was adamant in refusing to countenance low tariffs, even though this would benefit France more than Spain.⁶⁴ Laforest, with a greater understanding of the economic questions involved, lobbied hard for them nonetheless.⁶⁵ At the same time, parallel negotiations were begun in Paris by the duke de Frias, the Spanish ambassador there. The duke similarly proposed a minimum tariff of four to five percent.⁶⁶ It was only after much hesitation that this request was approved, albeit on a limited basis. (Frias, sensing an advantage, then asked for reduced tariffs on wool. He noted that French merchants, responding to market forces, and with the connivance of French officials, were already illegally circumventing the tariff in order to bring raw wool across the Pyrenees.⁶⁷ Again Napoleon hesitated. It was not

⁶³ Zylberberg, 490-6.

⁶⁴ Campo-Alange to Laforest. April 27, 1809. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 678, fol. 455-6.

⁶⁵ Laforest to Champagny. March 8, 1809 and May 9, 1809, in Laforest, II, 115, 248.

⁶⁶ Duke de Frias to Champagny. June 16, 1809. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 679, fol. 201.

⁶⁷ Champagny [Vienna] to Laforest. July 2, 1809. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 679, fol. 339.

until July of 1809 that he opened France to Spanish wool as well.⁶⁸)

This did not end Spanish demands. They complained that while French cotton goods exported to Spain were taxed at five percent, Spanish goods entering France were taxed at thirty to thirty-three.⁶⁹ Here Napoleon would not yield at all. Haunted by memories of previous trade treaties that had hurt French manufactures, he was too wise a politician to make any concessions.⁷⁰ Mercantilist principles, reinforced by political necessities, remained the lode star of his economic policy.⁷¹

Thus restricted, Laforest had continued through 1810 to work on a comprehensive Franco-Spanish commercial treaty that would make permanent the important trade advantages France had secured through invasion and occupation.⁷² Despite substantial resistance, he was

⁶⁸ Laforest to Champagny. July 5, 1809, in Laforest, II, 321-2.

⁶⁹ Campo-Alange to Laforest. March 20, 1809. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 678, fol. 286-7.

⁷⁰ Champagny to Minister of Interior. November 30, 1809. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 680, fol. 230-1.

Complaints about the Treaty of Basle were similar to those about the controversial 1786 Eden Treaty with Britain which had allowed English goods to flood France.

⁷¹ See in particular the “Report of the Minister of the Interior to His Imperial Majesty on the revision of the tariffs between France and Spain.” December 20, 1809. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 680, fol. 170-88.

⁷² “Tariff treaty negotiated by Laforest.” Jan. 2, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 1-4; “Note on the rectification of the Customs Duties of Spain. Proposed amendments desired by the French government.” June 9, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 682, fol. 275-6. The Berlin Decree of February 1806 that created the Continental System had already increased the French advantage enormously. By 1807, French textiles, 31 percent of all French exports to Spain and worth more than 20 million francs, flooded the country. Cotton spinners in the department of the Seine were effusive in their praise of the new policy: “[The tariff] has kept our shops busy, and enable us to provide cotton printers with products of the highest quality at moderate prices. We all [believe] the decree of February 22 is a new and important benefit from your Majesty.” For some cotton producing towns, such as Saint-

successful. Champagne was overflowing in his praise of Laforest for his critical efforts in achieving this against much opposition.⁷³ In securing the treaty, he was sure the ambassador had opened the way for the complete French domination of the Spanish economy after a French victory in the Peninsular War.

Despite this, Laforest never stopped trying to lower Spanish tariffs even further. The Spanish did not remain entirely supine either. Their best gambit, they now believed, was to increase smuggling as much as possible. In August 1811, Spain's Foreign Minister, with Joseph's support, therefore asked Laforest to allow the entry, not of raw cotton, but of cotton goods into France, pointing to a recent commercial treaty between France and Naples that allowed indirect trade with England as long as it was profitable for France.⁷⁴ This was a clever ploy. The Spanish knew that the licensing system upon which the agreement was based would be almost impossible to enforce. The war had disrupted the French consular network, as many of Spain's ports were too dangerous for French officials to live in.⁷⁵ Since Laforest's subordinates were therefore unable to determine the quantity of English goods entering the country, licensing would only facilitate smuggling. (By this time the Continental System had become so corrupt that even French army couriers took advantage of the protection afforded to them to illegally

Quentin, the benefit was permanent. (Even after 1815, when England again flooded Europe with cheap cotton goods, it was still able to produce seventeen million francs worth of cotton goods, five million more than in 1789.) It was widely hoped that the 1808 military invasion would be followed by an even greater, and altogether irresistible invasion of French goods. Bergeron, 175-180; Zylberberg, 476, 497.

⁷³ Champagne to the Minister of the Interior. June 30, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 682, fol. 362-3.

⁷⁴ Laforest to Bassano. August 13, 1811, in Laforest, V. 190-1; and Laforest to Champagne, April 11, 1811, in Laforest, V, 20.

⁷⁵ Laforest to Champagny. April 20, 1810, in Laforest, III, 349-50.

smuggle goods in and out of Spain, and complained bitterly when Spanish customs official tried to search them.)⁷⁶ Laforest demurred. At the same time, he was able to report was that the Spanish government had finally acceded to the collection of customs duties by the French at the Ebro River. This of course had long been done, only without Spanish permission.⁷⁷

French economic policy in Spain clearly shows Paris saw the country as a colony. This *European* colonial empire, it was hoped, would replace France's former empire in the Americas. Colonies in the New World were vulnerable to the British navy. Those in Europe, protected by the *Grande Armée*, were not. The Continental System was modified over time from a temporary effort to simply exclude English goods, justified as a wartime expedient, to a formalization of this relationship.⁷⁸ It was certainly much more effective in this way than in keeping English goods off the continent, or in destroying the British economy. Laforest played a central role in this by negotiating and maintaining a tariff structure that made the transition from English

⁷⁶ See for example, R to Champagny. November 19, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 684, fol. 181-2.

⁷⁷ Laforest to Champagny. June 16, 1810, in Laforest, III, 459-60.

⁷⁸ Some historians have suggested that this policy, more than any other, created the deep seated resentments that fatally weakened the empire. Writing of the Continental System, Katherine Aaslestad observes that "designed to support the empire, [its] exploitative and self-destructive policies ... ultimately undermined it." Katherine Aaslestad, "Revisiting the Continental System: Exploitation to Self-Destruction in the Napoleonic Empire," in *Napoleon and his Empire*, 115. While the Continental System certainly did not have a positive effect on the satellites, in the end they accepted its existence. It was not until the military power of France had been greatly reduced following Napoleon's disastrous campaigns of 1812 and 1813, that they were willing to leave the Empire. I would therefore argue that the Continental System was a secondary concern of the satellites and that it was French military defeats in Russia and Germany in 1812 and 1813 respectively that led to the decision of Napoleon's satellites to defect to the Allies in late 1813. Even then, some remained loyal (such as Saxony) to the Emperor to the end.

boycott to Spanish colonial status possible, demonstrating yet another way in which a French diplomat was central to the functioning of the imperial system. At the same time, he (like Otto) occasionally expressed a personal hope that both France and its satellites might lower their tariffs to increase European trade for the benefit of all.

Commerce and taxation were not the only means by which the Napoleonic Empire exploited its satellites. The role that diplomats played in the systematic expropriation of art was also important.

Laforest and the Pillaging of Spain's Art Treasures

Starting in the Revolutionary Era, many of Europe's art treasures were transferred to France.⁷⁹ This was done through direct expropriation by the military, and by treaty. These actions provided the foundation for the *Muséum central de la République*, which later became the *Musée Napoléon*, and finally, under the Restoration, the Louvre.⁸⁰ As early as June 1794, the Committee of Public Instruction had issued a decree ordering "educated citizens to follow the armies charged with recognizing, and transporting [to France] masterpieces which are found in countries conquered by us."⁸¹

Napoleon became interested in this transfer during the first Italian campaign.⁸² The

⁷⁹ An excellent overview of the subject can be found in Dorothy Mackay Quynn, "The Art Confiscations of the Napoleonic Era," in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (April 1945): 437-60.

⁸⁰ Jean Chatelain, "Musée Napoléon," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 361-2.

⁸¹ Cited in Jean Chatelain. *Dominique Vivant Denon et le Louvre de Napoléon* (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 1957), 163. Also see the article by Jean Baticle, "La Mission en Espagne," in *Les vies de Dominique-Vivant Denon*, 2 Vols., Sous la direction de Daniela Gallo. (Paris: La Documentation Française, 2001), Tome 1, 325-44.

⁸² The second treaty General Bonaparte negotiated with an Italian state, namely Parma, included articles

peninsula had long been a treasure house of masterpieces. General Bonaparte certainly recognized the importance to his own reputation of sending many of them to Paris. As a result, a significant number were taken between 1796 and 1800.⁸³ In imitation of an ancient Roman triumph, some, accompanied by a procession of live animals and a military band, were later displayed in a two-day parade in Paris.⁸⁴ (Bavaria's turn to be plundered would come later. Seventy-two works were taken from museums and private collections during General Moreau's occupation in 1800.⁸⁵ Among the more notable were two Rubens, a Titian, and the Dürer masterpiece *Adam and Eve*.⁸⁶ This collection was, however, considered "mediocre" in comparison with the Italian works. Still, only twenty-eight Bavarian paintings were later repatriated to their original owners after Waterloo.)

French ambassadors were usually given the task of determining which works should be seized, and Laforest made great efforts to obtain those of Spanish masters. The Foreign Ministry

specifying the number and types of works of art to be surrendered. Subsequent treaties would include similar articles. This would be mirrored in subsequent treaties, including that with the Papacy in June 1796. Hanley, *The Genesis of Napoleonic Propaganda*, 114-5.

⁸³ Cecil Gould. *Trophy of Conquest: The Musée Napoléon and the Creation of the Louvre* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), 41-66; Hanley, 112-23. Gould argues that General Bonaparte may have had additional, psychological reasons for plundering Italy of its masterpieces, thinking that, "by removing the greatest treasures from his ancestral country to his adopted one, he was making the fusion more complete for himself.": Gould, 43.

⁸⁴ Gould, 65-6.

⁸⁵ Charles Saunier. *Les conquêtes artistiques de la Révolution et de l'Empire* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1902), 91-3.

⁸⁶ A full listing of the paintings taken by the French in 1800 can be found in "Tableaux choisis dans divers musées de Munich et envoyés en France par l'armée du rhin, le 12 fructidor an VIII (August 30, 1800)," AN O3 1430 cited in footnote 2, Saunier, 91.

had already developed procedures to help this process. As a result, Napoleon's Director of Fine Arts arrived in Madrid in January 1809 to examine the royal collection.⁸⁷ But since he only stayed a short time, the real job was left to Laforest.

It was next announced that Joseph had authorized the sending of fifty paintings of the "Spanish school" to Paris.⁸⁸ (This pales in comparison with the number of works stolen by French generals in the same eperiod.)⁸⁹ Progress then slowed, and it was not until September 1810 that Laforest could report the paintings were ready to be sent to France.⁹⁰ Then it was Joseph who hesitated. Hoping to keep the art, he ordered the compilation of a new list, this time under the direction of a group that included Francisco de Goya. Laforest supervised this as well. Again, things moved slowly.

Action was finally taken in early 1813, when the Bureau of Sciences and Fine Arts asked the Foreign Minister to find out where the paintings were.⁹¹ By this time Laforest had been

⁸⁷ Gould, 86-7. For a short biography of Denon, see Appendix I.

⁸⁸ Laforest to Champagny. December 20, 1809, in Laforest, III, 137-8. The list can be found in AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 173. It was sent by Champagny to the Interior Ministry in February 1810: Champagny to Minister of the Interior. February 23, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 681, fol. 175.

⁸⁹ Marshal Soult, for example, was notorious for his plundering of museums and churches, acquiring more than 100 paintings. For a more expansive discussion of the rediscovery of Spanish art by the French, see Ilse Hempel Lipschutz. *Spanish Painting and the French Romantics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 3-122. Also see "Appendix A: Spanish Paintings Listed in the Official Catalogues of the Musée du Louvre," "Appendix B: Spanish Paintings Listed in Private French Collections," and "Appendix C: Movement of Art Works during the Napoleonic Period," in Lipschutz, 217-326.

⁹⁰ Laforest to Champagny. September 6, 1810, in Laforest, IV, 123; and Romero [Minister of Justice] to Laforest. AAE. CP Espagnire Vol. 683, fol. 219.

⁹¹ Bureau of Sciences and Fine Arts to Bassano. February 9, 1813. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 691, fol. 27-8.

forced by Wellington's advance to flee to Valladolid. He ordered Vice-Consul Desjobert to transport several boxes to Paris from there.⁹² He also asked Marshal Jourdan to provide the necessary military escort. The shipment finally arrived at Bayonne at the end of July.⁹³ Joseph's own attempt to take part of the Spanish royal collection during his retreat from Madrid marks an end to this sordid episode. More than 200 paintings were eventually captured in his baggage train after the battle of Vitoria. As a token of their appreciation, the Spanish provisional government allowed the duke to buy eighty-three of them at a very good price.⁹⁴

Ironically, the theft of so much Spanish art brought it to the attention of a wider European audience, increasing both its reputation, and value. As the duc de Bassano observed with remarkable hypocrisy, "the Spanish school was little known outside [Spain], although it had produced a great number of estimable painters. We have taken the opportunity to [allow] Europe to enjoy it by placing [the school] in the first [rank], where it belongs."⁹⁵ Exposure led to new interest in El Greco, Murillo, Goya and Velazquez. After Napoleon's abdication, the victorious Allies demanded that stolen works be repatriated. Few were.

France was able to keep most of the stolen art (especially from Italy) after Napoleon's abdication. Many additional works in private collections were also never returned. In the end,

⁹² Laforest [Valladolid] to Desjobert [Vice-Consul General of France in Madrid]. April 16, 1813. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 691, fol. 161-2.

⁹³ Minister of the Interior to Caulaincourt. July 29, 1813. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 691, fol. 273. These included three by Velasquez, three by Zurbarán, as well others by Pereda, Maino, Murillo, Ribera, and Ribalta. Baticle, "La mission en Espagne," 332.

⁹⁴ For a list of these, see *Catalogue of Paintings in the Wellington Museum Apsley House* (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2009), especially 9-14.

⁹⁵ Bassano to Laforest. [Ciphared] March 8, 1813. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 691, fol. 95-6.

only 284 paintings, and 108 ‘Objets Divers,’ were repatriated to Spain.⁹⁶ The emperor’s demand for great art had obliged Laforest to obtain the help of Spanish ministries, even if they were sometimes understandably slow in complying with his demands. Although it took considerable effort and time, Laforest was proud of his ability to acquire masterpieces even as the Bonapartist kingdom was collapsing. As shameful as it was, it was one of the ambassador’s most successful projects.

Conclusions

Napoleon’s exploitative policies were distinctly less successful in Spain than in Bavaria, largely because the Peninsular War required him to spend many millions of francs on his armies. This was a unique case, since within the empire money usually flowed from the satellites to France. However, if we exempt the war, Laforest was at least as successful as Otto in enforcing the imperial system. Even when he obtained loans for the Madrid government, it was in furtherance of exploitation. Other than this, he could do little to solve Spain’s financial problems. Suggestions that the Spanish be allowed to collect taxes in the regions directly under French military control were ignored.

The Madrid government’s greatest problem was its inability to overcome its financial difficulties. This was not simply the fault of the French for denying Madrid revenues, or of the Bourbons for leaving a large debt. Joseph’s regime was perfectly capable of failing spectacularly on its own. It spent money on soldiers who immediately deserted to the enemy, and implemented free market policies that stopped the flow of badly needed revenues. Taxes

⁹⁶ “Etat général des objets d’art et de curiosité enlevés du Musée Royal par les Commissaires des puissances alliées,” AN O3 1429, cited in Saunier, 161.

collected on former government monopolies might have helped fill the gap, but Madrid was unwilling to reverse Cabarrús' laissez-faire policies. Marshal Suchet, by comparison, established a much more effective government in a part of Spain that succeeded in both winning over the local population and financing itself.

The chronicle of the central government's finances also reveals a series of shortsighted steps that mortgaged future stability for the temporary solution of short-term loans. These at first allowed the government to pay its bills, but by 1811, revenues began to dramatically decline. Cost-cutting measures were implemented to little avail. Napoleon's subsidies to his brother began only in April 1811, and even then their arrival was haphazard and less than what had been promised. No payments at all arrived after May 1812.⁹⁷ Within less than five years, Joseph's government had all but expired.

Laforest had a more notable success with the 1810 commercial treaty allowing increased French exports to Spain. This accomplished what French governments had desired for almost a century. It was an impressive achievement, even if the product of Spain's subordination to France. The unfair trading practices seen in Bavaria—the maintenance of high tariffs to protect French manufactures while lowering those of the satellite, were repeated in Spain. Laforest also managed to obtain enough sheep to create the beginning of a French merino industry, ending Spain's monopoly. The plunder of art was another example of his energetic management. It took a considerable amount of the ambassador's time and effort, due mostly to the passive resistance that even the *Afrancesados* showed to French expropriation of the royal art collection.

⁹⁷ One of the ironies of the Peninsular War is that when Joseph arrived at Vitoria in early 1813, five million francs had just arrived to cover his expenses. The entire sum was stolen by Wellington's troops after the battle, a distraction that helped ensure the escape of the remnants of Joseph's army.

Laforest's example shows once again how ruthless French exploitation of the satellites could be, but also how useful he was in overcoming sloth and obstinacy.

It is clear by comparing Laforest's experiences to Otto's that France's policy in Spain was based more on short term expedients, with myriad twists and turns. Still, both ambassadors succeeded in their basic goals of military and financial exploitation. Like Otto, Laforest also deftly maneuvered his Spanish collaborators into agreeing to commercial terms set by Napoleon, although both ambassadors privately hoped for a more equitable tariff structure that Napoleon was willing to accept, revealed in free trade sentiments in their correspondence. One suspects that they would have agreed with Marcel Dunan that if expanded trade would have been allowed to benefit all the nations of Europe, they would have complied much more readily with the Continental System.

The exploitation of Spain was Laforest's most important task, but it was not the only one. Spain in particular required Napoleon's Foreign Ministry to deal with some issues unique to that country. This includes close cooperation with Napoleon's generals. The creation and dissemination of propaganda was also particularly important here, since it not only helped keep collaborators loyal to the Empire, but also worked to win over broader elements of a very skeptical Spanish population.

Chapter Nine: Laforest and the Implementation of French Policy in Spain

When Laforest first arrived in Madrid, he quickly realized he would have to convince the Spanish government to implement a variety of projects large and small. As previously noted, these included arranging the sale of the Spanish royal jewels, opening Spain to French trade, and even obtaining an indemnity for a French captain whose ship and cargo had been seized in Mexico.

Among the most important of these was arbitrating a dispute between the French Commission of Sequesters and Indemnities and the Madrid government. Understanding that the maintenance of good relations with Joseph's ministers was among his most important tasks, he set about this with great care. He realized the outcome would have profound implications for the future of the Madrid government's relationship with the empire.

The Imperial Commission of Sequesters and Indemnities

When Napoleon arrived in Bayonne in November 1808, he ordered the sequestration of the property of all Spaniards who opposed him. His order was soon extended to everyone of importance who did not publicly support Joseph. The order was doubly useful. First, it allowed the seizure of property of Joseph's enemies, therefore providing the government with a new source of money. Second, it convinced undecided Spaniards to join the Bonapartist kingdom or face harsh penalties. Those affected soon flooded the French Police Ministry with pledges of allegiance.¹ It was the question of who would receive the expropriated property that became a source of contention between Paris and Madrid.

The dispute began in December 1808, when a *Commission impériale des séquestres et*

¹ Fouche to Champagny, January 25, 1809. AAE. EP Espagene Vol. 678, fol. 281-2.

indemnités was created.² Laforest was made chairman, although his many duties prevented him from attending many of its meetings.³ Savary, as Military Governor of Madrid, executed the judgments, first arresting individuals, and then selling their property.⁴ Proceeds were applied to the emperor's special account, the *Domaine Extraordinaire*, designed to support the armies in Spain.⁵

By January 1809, the Foreign Ministry had already begun to receive appeals from those who now wished to swear allegiance to Joseph. Tensions between the Commission and the

² Berthier [Chamartin] to Laforest. December 20, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 677, fol. 325-6: "I send you, Monsieur, clarification of a decree of the 18th [of November] by which the Emperor orders that there is established in Madrid an Imperial Commission of Sequesters and Indemnities presided over by M. Villot-Fréville, Master of Requests... I further charge M. [Villot-Fréville] with coordinating all [the necessary] measures with General Belliard, Governor [of Madrid], and you, for the establishment of the Commission and for its successful operations." For Villot-Fréville's biography, see Footnote 1, in Laforest, I, 7; and Jean-Louis Halperin, "Villot-Fréville (Pierre)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, 948. For Laforest's assessment of Fréville, see Laforest to Champagny. February 3, 1809, in Laforest, II, 40-3.

³ The papers of the Imperial Commission had been thought lost for over a century until rediscovered in the Archives des Affaires Etrangères in the 1970's, and can be found in AAE. Mémoires et Documents Espagne Vol. 421. Unfortunately the letters of the Commission were always addressed by, or to the Commission as a whole, so it is not possible to discover the responsibilities of each member.

Laforest makes few references in his correspondence to doing much for the committee, so his chairmanship may have been

largely honorary.

⁴ Cortada, 108-9; Connelly, 234. Savary apparently went as far as to sell the furniture from sequestered houses on the streets of Madrid.

⁵ Napoleon [Valladolid] to Joseph. January 11, 1809 [Noon], in Haegle, *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 632.

Madrid government began at the same time. (Finance Minister Cabarrús was partly responsible for this, complaining the Commission's work was usurping Joseph's authority.)⁶ Laforest also played a direct role in the disposition of this property.⁷ The king, who had objected to the formation of the Commission from the first,⁸ later commented bitterly that: "The French commissioners, with the French ambassador at their head, ordered the confiscation of property of the leading families in Spain, and passed all profits on to the imperial treasury."⁹

To preempt any future sequestrations, Joseph ordered his own officers to seize the property of rebels not specifically mentioned by Napoleon's decree.¹⁰ This was important, since the sums in question were large, and the Madrid government was already desperate for every *reale*. (Property seized in one month alone was valued at the equivalent of 1,278,000 francs.)¹¹ By the end of the summer, enough property had been accumulated to issue fifty million *reales* more in *cédulas* for the expenses of the Interior Ministry, and another fifty million for the War Ministry.¹² Several houses were also handed over to "the principal personages of [the king's] civil and military [personnel]..."¹³

⁶ Cabarrús must also have hoped that the Spanish treasury would benefit from the proceeds of the sequestered property. Laforest to Champagny. February 3, 1809, in Laforest, II, 41-2.

⁷ Laforest to Campo-Alange. March 18, 1809. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 678, fol. 281-2.

⁸ Joseph [La Florida] to Napoleon. January 8, 1809, in Haegle, *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 626.

⁹ Joseph Bonaparte. *Mémoires et correspondance politique et militaire du roi Joseph*, 10 Vols., edited by Albert du Casse. (Paris: Perottin, 1856-7), Vol. V, 257, cited in Cortada, 161.

¹⁰ Laforest to Champagny. March 13, 1809, in Laforest, II, 124.

¹¹ Dominique Balagny. *La campagne de l'Empereur Napoléon en Espagne (1808-1809)*, 4 Vols. (Paris: Berger-Levrault Libraries, 1902-6), Vol. III, 102, cited in Cortada, 110.

¹² Laforest to Champagny. August 21, 1809, in Laforest, II, 378-9.

¹³ Laforest to Champagny. August 21, 1809, in Laforest, II, 379.

It is not surprising then that in the midst of this conflict that many Spanish officials refused to cooperate with the Commission.¹⁴ Recognizing the need to reach an understanding, Villot-Fréville, its president, met with Cabarrús and Laforest, who tried to clarify the rights and Commission's duties.¹⁵ Despite these efforts, Joseph remained hostile, eventually ordering Villot-Fréville to hand over the sequestered houses. He refused, saying only the emperor could make him do so. Still, the Commission's work was abruptly stopped.

Since Napoleon refused to discuss the issue even with his brother, it remained unresolved until the Commission's offices were moved to France.¹⁶ Laforest, hoping to mask the deep divisions between Madrid and Paris, said the whole affair had merely been the result of a misunderstanding between Villot-Fréville and the king.

Unable to refrain from using such a politically and financially useful weapon, Napoleon then ordered the sequestration of the Spanish property of those cardinals who had refused to attend his marriage to the Archduchess Marie Louise.¹⁷ These churchmen were now to be treated the same way the Revolution had dealt with émigrés. (Their property would soon be seized not only in Spain, but everywhere in Europe.) When a question arose as to who should receive the

¹⁴ Joseph Bonaparte. *Mémoires et correspondance politique et militaire du Roi Joseph*, 10 Vols., edité par Albert du Casse. (Paris: Perottin, 1856-7), Vol. V, 257, cited in Cortada, 161.

¹⁵ Laforest to Champagny. March 22, 1809, in Laforest, II, 147-8.

¹⁶ Laforest to Champagny. April 19, 1809, in Laforest, II, 200-1.

¹⁷ "Extract of the Minutes of Secretary of State [Palace de Compiègne]." April 8, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 682, [Microfilm P 9383] fol. 33-4. The sequestration, [applied to Cardinals Denommé, Savoie, Mattei, Pignattelli, Della Somaglia, Di Sistro, Saluyye, Brancadoro, Galeffi, Oppizoni, Litta, Scoffi, Gabrielli, Consalvi, and Ruffo. For Laforest's acknowledgement of the order, see Laforest to Champagny. April 29, 1810, in Laforest, III, 348. Referred to as «les Cardinals noirs,» they had refused to attend because of the French annexation of the Papal States in 1809.

proceeds, the Foreign Ministry instructed Laforest to send it to the French treasury.¹⁸

This was a major defeat for the Spanish government, which had hoped that sequestrations would enrich its treasury. In fact, the confiscated property it did receive met only a small part of the debt, while at the same time setting a powerful precedent for future humiliating interactions between the government and French officials. As Rafael Cortada noted, it established in the minds of many that “Joseph lacked the political as well as the military power he needed to... present himself to the Spanish people as a king[,] rather than as a vassal of the French Empire.”¹⁹ Madrid was now seen to be powerless to stop the French from despoiling the country.

This was also a defeat for Laforest. While he delivered the monies Napoleon demanded, he also understood he would have to work that much harder to keep Joseph’s ministers appeased. But the way in which appeals against the Commission’s judgments were addressed to Laforest also indicated a general understanding of his importance.

Since Laforest had to act as intermediary between French demands and Spanish desires, he very soon realized how difficult his job in Spain would be. The affair signaled future conflicts with other French civil and military officials in Spain. Especially with the military.

Interacting with the French Generals

Napoleon seems only occasionally to have had any long term vision for Spain. The stability, let alone legitimacy, of Joseph’s regime was never as important as the profits to be made in the kingdom. The emperor wanted money for his wars. His generals wanted it for their armies, and for themselves. Joseph wanted more. He wanted respect. He understood that

¹⁸ Champagny to Laforest. August 12, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 683, fol. 160.

¹⁹ Cortada, 163.

without that, he could never rule. Laforest, who seems to have been one of the very few French officials who did not make a personal fortune in Spain, came over time to be almost as committed to Joseph's cause as to Napoleon's. Charged with making the imperial system work, he had in effect acquired two masters. Subordinate to Napoleon, he also had to work with (and to some extent for) Joseph. At once an agent for exploitation, he was also a mitigating force in the service of the king and his *Afrancesados* ministers, without whose cooperation no even quasi-independent Spanish government could exist. The unilateral acts of Napoleon's generals in Spain were therefore a constant concern for the ambassador. Like Otto, he not only empathized with the local collaborators, but often criticized French actions. Unfortunately for him (and Joseph), he was usually unable, despite his best efforts, to force Napoleon's hard bitten commanders to obey the king's orders or his own suggestions.²⁰

The ambassador tried very hard to cooperate with the French forces. This was not always easy, even when he provided them with military intelligence. Like Otto, Laforest had been instructed by Champagny (in August 1808) to set up a spy network.²¹ Reports from Laforest's subordinates, the consuls in Spain's major cities, proved invaluable in this regard. For the consuls themselves, life in occupied Spain was difficult and dangerous, as they were often at risk from attack by the *guerrilleros* or patriotic locals. Despite this, Joseph de Canclaux, the French Consul in Seville, forwarded information about the rebel army of General de Bellune in Andalusia.²² Yet even here there were difficulties. Vice-Consul Molin in Barcelona was, for example, the object of deep suspicion by the military, and was even arrested when forged

²⁰ See Laforest, Vol. VI for various examples of the unwillingness of the Imperial armies to follow Joseph's orders in 1812.

²¹ Champagny to Laforest. August 31, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 676, fol. 177-8.

²² Laforest to Bassano. September 7, 1811, in Laforest, V, 239.

documents suggested he was meeting with the resistance.²³ Although was quickly released, but the incident suggests how overbearing the military could be even with French civil officials. (As the chief French diplomatic official in Spain, it was Laforest's duty to manage this occasionally troubled cooperation with the army.)

These collisions were trivial compared with the stormy relations between the generals and the Madrid government. This was one of Laforest's greatest continuing problems. The officers who caused him the most difficulty were Marshals Soult and Marmont, and Generals Dorsenne and Kellerman. Soult continuously gave offense by ignoring Joseph's authority. (A temporary rapprochement was made between Joseph and the marshal only in 1810, when the king briefly joined Soult's Army of the South in Andalusia.) Although he remained steadfast in his defense of the empire, Laforest repeatedly criticized Soult for not forwarding revenues to the Madrid government despite promises to do so.²⁴ (According to Nicole Gotteri, Soult's modern biographer, Joseph's and Laforest's criticisms of the marshal were unfair, as the pay of the Army of the South had already fallen in arrears, leaving him no money to send to Madrid.)²⁵ Tired of prevarications, Laforest wrote a strongly worded letter to the marshal himself, demanding he allow the king's officials more authority in the south.

The ambassador's complaints became unending. In January of 1812, he accused Soult of having denied the Madrid government twenty million francs.²⁶ He also accused him on behalf of the king of having profited from silver mines whose revenues were owed to the Spanish

²³ Molin [Fort Montjou] to General Duhesme. June 18, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 682, fol. 300-7.

²⁴ Jean-Marc Lafon, "Espagne," in *1810: Le tournant de l'Empire*,

²⁵ Laforest to Champagny. [Ciphred] November 19, 1810, in Laforest, IV, 244-5; Footnote 2, in Nicole Gotteri. *Le Maréchal Soult* (Paris: B. Giovanangeli, 2000), 436.

²⁶ Laforest to Bassano. January 10, 1812, in Laforest, VI, 12-3.

treasury.²⁷ So effective were the ambassador's protests that Soult agreed to use the silver to at least buy grain for the local population.²⁸ This was followed more ambassadorial complaints through 1812 and 1813 about the marshal's unwillingness to take orders from Joseph.²⁹

The ambassador was even more insistent in his criticisms of General Kellerman. He had first offended both Laforest and the Madrid government in November 1809 when he had refused to recognize the authority of Spanish officials in the northern territories he occupied.³⁰ Joseph complained to Laforest that Kellerman had also sold *biens nationaux*, created criminal courts on his own authority, and allowed commerce within his military district to go untaxed by Madrid.³¹ The king (and his ministers) had even more pressing political reasons to protest. The general, who had a well deserved reputation for brutality in dealing with the *guerrilleros* (the Spanish called him "the hangman of Valladolid") was seen by many as one of the chief impediments to any rapprochement with the resistance.³² He was also one of three generals Joseph asked Napoleon to recall early in the following year.³³

²⁷ Laforest to Bassano. March 6, 1812, in Laforest, VI, 113-4.

²⁸ Laforest to Bassano. [Ciphred] March 13, 1812, in Laforest, VI, 122-3.

²⁹ Laforest [Valence] to Bassano. September 10, 1812, in Laforest, VII, 22-4; Joseph [Moxente] to Soult. September 27, 1812, cited in footnote 1, in Laforest, VI, 45.

³⁰ The Madrid government had tried to enforce a decree expropriating the property of Godoy. Laforest to Champagny. November 10, 1809, in Laforest, III, 74-5.

³¹ Laforest to Champagny. August 25, 1810, in Laforest, IV, 101. A more detailed examination of Kellerman's efforts to create an independent judiciary in the Sixth Military Government can be found in Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 409-14.

³² Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, 258.

³³ The other two generals were Thiebault and Loison. Joseph [Cordova] to Napoleon. January 25, 1810, in *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 698; Laforest to Champagny. June 1, 1810, in Laforest, III, 421.

Joseph then went even further, warning Paris directly that Kellerman's actions were continually inspiring many to take up arms against the French.³⁴ This charge appears to have reached the emperor himself, as he asked War Minister Clarke to look into the alleged abuses.³⁵ The problem for Napoleon, however, was not that Kellerman was exploiting the Spanish, but that none of the money was flowing to Paris. Napoleon therefore instructed Berthier in February 1811 to remind Kellerman that "it is against all regulations for those charged with the administration [of Spain] to abuse their situation in order to profit personally."³⁶ The reprimand appears to have had little effect, since new complaints were made by the Spanish against the general several months later. In fact, Kellerman seems to have only intensified his exploitation.³⁷

Laforest played an important role in this affair. In a letter of February 1811 he fully supported Madrid's claims. He even went so far as to second its suggestion that money from the sale of *biens nationaux* located within the areas of military administration be used as compensation for the requisitions of French armies. As he reported,

The duc de Campo-Alange's requests in this regard strikes me as just. A great part of the property [sold by Kellerman]... is equal to the fees owed to the [Spanish] state by the [local] communes... It will be useful to allow the [Madrid] government to give to the inhabitants of these provinces [in the north] that [our armies] directly administer (by virtue of the imperial decrees of February 8 and March 29, 1810) the satisfaction of recovering what is legitimately owed to them for [goods] furnished to the French...³⁸

³⁴ Jose de Hervas, Marquis d'Almenara to Champagny. November 4, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 684, fol. 149-50.

³⁵ Napoleon to Clarke. October 27, 1810, no. 17082, in *Correspondance*, Vol. 21, 239.

³⁶ Napoleon to Berthier. February 2, 1811, no. 17317, in *Correspondance* Vol. 21, 379.

³⁷ Chevalier de Santivanez to Champagny. February 21, 1811. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 685, fol. 242-3; Champagny to Berthier. March 2, 1811. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 685, fol. 271.

³⁸ Laforest to Champagny. February 10, 1811, in Laforest, IV, 446.

Laforest's complaints about Kellerman did ultimately have an effect. He was recalled in May 1811.

Unfortunately for the ambassador (and the Spanish), Kellerman was not the only corrupt general in Spain. The comte de Dorsenne was another. In January 1811, Laforest had received complaints that French merchants in Dorsenne's military district were avoiding Spanish customs duties.³⁹ As one might expect, these complaints had little effect on the general. At the same time, Jean Duden, an agent attached to the Army of the North, was accused by Joseph of re-imposing taxes that were stirring up Spaniards against the occupation.⁴⁰ Although General Caffarelli du Falga replaced Dorsenne in 1812, the taxes remained. In the south, Marshal Marmont's decision to expand his authority was equally resented, inspiring new warnings from Laforest about the damage being done to Joseph's prestige.⁴¹ But while Laforest had the ear of ministers in Paris, complaints from Madrid were as usual ignored. Typical of this was Berthier's refusal in March of 1812 to even meet with a Spanish delegation. Some months later, with the French armies deep in Russia, War Minister Clarke told the duc de Bassano "it is [important] not to lose sight of the intention of His Imperial Majesty that his armies [in Spain] be paid for as much as possible by the country [itself]."⁴²

The number of complaints and requests addressed to the ambassador by the Spanish ministers increased in 1812. Laforest passed these on to Paris. The ambassador was therefore continually assuring the *Afrancesados* that French exploitation was only the result of rogue generals and officials operating without the Emperor's sanction. He also promised that imperial

³⁹ Campo-Alange to Laforest. January 9, 1811. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 685, fol. 37-8.

⁴⁰ Laforest to Bassano. September 6, 1811, in Laforest, V, 234-6.

⁴¹ Laforest to Bassano. September 6, 1811, in Laforest, V, 231-3.

⁴² Clarke to Bassano. August 17, 1812. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 690, fol. 100.

exploitation would end after the Peninsular War was won. At the same time he began to commiserate with the Madrid government over the difficulties it faced in instituting reforms, especially those concerning the judicial system.

The Judiciary: an Attempt at Reform

There was a pressing desire among *Afrancesados* throughout the Napoleonic period to introduce the domestic reforms they believed Spain desperately needed. To do this in the middle of a civil war was of course problematical. This did not stop them from trying.⁴³ They wanted to create a centralized, French-style judiciary, based on the Code Napoleon. Their first step was the elimination of the old Council of Castile early in 1809.⁴⁴ Lesser courts were in turn dissolved in August.⁴⁵

Joseph's ministers wanted to replace them with a new hierarchy of civil and criminal tribunals, accompanied by regional courts of appeal.⁴⁶ Courts were to be introduced at the prefectural and sub-prefectural levels, following the French model.⁴⁷ Their regulations were

⁴³ Laforest's account of the judicial reforms introduced under Joseph is so detailed that Xavier Magescas acknowledges it as one of his two key sources (along with the reports of the king's ministers). Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 267-382.

⁴⁴ Magescas provides a history of the Council of Castile from its origins in the thirteenth century to the Peninsular War. Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 270-91.

⁴⁵ Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 295.

⁴⁶ Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 324. The cost of the new court system was estimated at 100 million reales, with the remainder to be covered by various municipal and provincial contributions. The Madrid government, with its almost empty treasury, was of course able to meet these expenses only sporadically, especially when it came to paying officials' salaries.

⁴⁷ Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 343-4.

directly translated from French manuals.⁴⁸ Even so, preparation for the new courts was slow. Delayed by the flight of the royal court after Marmont's defeat at Salamanca in 1812, it was not until the following year that any real concerted effort of reorganization began.⁴⁹ Because of the late start, only a fraction of the judicial reforms were ever implemented. Nor surprisingly, the one part that was was the Extraordinary Criminal Tribunals charged with the trial and summary execution of *guerrilleros*.⁵⁰

Plans for the new law code, which was to combine French and Spanish statutes, would have to wait, being first discussed by Joseph's Council of State in December 1809. It was then decided that a commission be created to adapt the Code Napoleon to Spanish law.⁵¹ Laforest described its members as "enlightened [and] distinguished."⁵² Laforest himself was to play a significant role, along with Don Pedro Mora y Lomas⁵³ and Don Manuel Cambronero, both members of Joseph's Council, in this work.⁵⁴ Here is an example of a French ambassador moving beyond advice regarding reform, and actually influencing the laws of a satellite. Laforest's influence can be seen in the close adherence of the Spanish to the Code Napoleon. The contrast with Otto's lack of involvement in the Bavarian Constitution is striking. Laforest

⁴⁸ Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 336. The one major difference was the Spanish refusal to implement the French jury system.

⁴⁹ Laforest to Bassano. July 22, 1812, in Laforest, VI, 357.

⁵⁰ These courts sometimes also dealt with smugglers. Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 353-64.

⁵¹ "Extract of the minutes of the Secretary of State." December 16, 1809, A.G.S., *Gracia y justicia*, liasse 1088, cited in Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 330.

⁵² Laforest to Champagny. December 18, 1809, in Laforest, III, 136.

⁵³ Lomas had been appointed Intendant of Madrid in August 1809.

⁵⁴ Laforest to Champagny. August 9, 1810, in Laforest, IV, 74.

was happy to report eighteen months later that the commission, although still wed to Spanish custom, had introduced many French ideas, such as equality before the law, the abolition of torture, and the use of juridically obtained arrest warrants.⁵⁵

Although the code remained unrealized (in part because of the time it took to complete it, and in part because the government was unable to pay the judges, clerks, lawyers, and bailiffs that the new organization required), it was nonetheless illustrative of the intentions of both Laforest and the *Afrancesados* to introduce fundamental legal reforms. Laforest's participation helped convince reform-minded *Afrancesados* that the empire was not simply about exploitation. If Laforest played a greater direct role than Otto, this was to redress the far greater burdens of empire endured by the Spanish. Even so, more immediate problems, such as the terrible famine that struck Madrid made such reforms less pressing.

The Famine

Madrid's population faced a crisis in the winter of 1811-1812 when a poor harvest, combined with a breakdown in transportation caused by the war, threatened the city with starvation.⁵⁶ Madrid had always been dependent on food from the surrounding provinces, and

⁵⁵ Laforest was amused to note a close facsimile of the code being drafted in Madrid was being drawn up by the rebel Junta in Cadiz. Laforest to Bassano. January 7, 1812, in Laforest, VI, 9-10.

⁵⁶ Farming in Spain was adversely affected by several factors, including the requisition and deliberate destruction of crops by both sides, the conscription of able-bodied men from the countryside, and a special tax the Madrid government had placed on wheat. In addition, *guerrillero* attacks kept a great deal of food from reaching the capital. (The Portuguese did not face the same problems, as the British were able to import enough grain from the United States to feed Wellington's army and the local population.) Fraser, 432-4, 439; Laforest to Bassano. August 17, 1811, in Laforest, V, 201; and Laforest to Bassano. August 24, 1811, in Laforest, V, 209-10.

the systematic seizure of food supplies by French troops and *guerrilleros* made deliveries more than usually difficult.⁵⁷ In May of 1811, the price of wheat in Madrid had already risen by a third.⁵⁸ A year later, it would increase an additional 400 percent. Trying to prevent mass hunger, Joseph donated half the salaries of his officials to pay for grain from as far away as North Africa.⁵⁹ The government also opened the royal granaries, although this only temporarily reduced the price of bread. Even more ominously, the War Ministry began to pay its employees in rations.⁶⁰

By September 1811 *Madriileños* literally began to die on the streets, as many had already sold their homes to buy food.⁶¹ Grain prices continued to rise inexorably, despite repeated reductions of the grain tax.⁶² More than 2,000 corpses were collected in October alone. Between ten and twenty thousand eventually died before a bumper crop the following year ended the crisis.

Joseph's government had emerged from these events a failure, having demonstrated its

⁵⁷ Laforest to Bassano. November 14, 1811, in Laforest, V, 333-4. Toledo, a major supplier for the capital, had had a tax of a million *reales* imposed on it by the Army of Portugal. Glover, 211.

⁵⁸ Fraser, 435.

⁵⁹ Almenara to Laforest. September 27, 1811. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 687, fol. 112-4. The British and the Spanish patriots both imported African grain during the Peninsular War, so it would have been reasonable for the French to do so as well.

⁶⁰ Laforest to Bassano. January 31, 1812, in Laforest, VI, 57.

⁶¹ Laforest to Bassano. November 22, 1811, in Laforest, V, 343. For a firsthand account of the famine, see the diary of Juan Domingo Palomar, a hospital administrator and member of the town council of Alcalá de Henares, a suburb of the capital. Juan Domingo Palomar. *Diario de un patriota complutense en la guerra de la independencia*, edited by Juan Catalina García. (Madrid: Tip. de los hijos de M.G. Hernandez, 1894).

⁶² Laforest to Bassano. November 25, 1811, in Laforest, V, 346.

inability to meet the most basic needs of its people. Instead of focusing entirely on famine relief, the *Afrancesados* had continued to spend time discussing the new law code. Their debates about the Bayonne Constitution that Napoleon had granted them in 1808 were even more consuming. Laforest's role in these is the subject of the next section.

The Bayonne Constitution and the Failure of the Council of State

Spain's 1808 Constitution initially seemed a liberal document. It established a limited monarchy with a French-style system of administration, including powerful ministries, and a Council of State placed at the center of the governmental bureaucracy.⁶³ It also created two parliamentary chambers, the Cortès and the Senate (neither of which went beyond the preliminary planning stage).⁶⁴ The Constitution in addition abolished all internal customs barriers, and created a uniform system of taxation. (A vague reference in one article regarding the traditional rights, or *fueros*, of certain provinces, led many to believe they would be abolished. This helped stir up resistance in the northern provinces.)⁶⁵ Tax privileges for the nobility and clergy were reduced, although not eliminated, and it anticipated a single legal code to be created by the aforementioned judicial commission.⁶⁶ Torture was to be abolished.⁶⁷ It

⁶³ The translated text of the Constitution (including the names of all who signed it) can be found in "Appendix A: Bayonne Constitution," in Cortada, 308-24. Articles 27-31 and 52-60 described the duties and functions of the ministries and the Council of State. Also see Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 108-49, 200-66, for an analysis of the effect of the Constitution on how the Madrid government functioned.

⁶⁴ Articles 32-39 and 61-86 covered the formation of a national Cortès and Senate.

⁶⁵ Article 144.

⁶⁶ Articles 96-114 provided for the regulation of the judiciary.

⁶⁷ Articles 127-132: Regulations regarding arrests. Article 123: The Abolition of Torture. Article 145:

even established freedom of the press.

The Constitution was notably conservative in other ways. Catholicism was retained as the state religion, and there was no declaration of religious toleration. The Inquisition was also preserved out of fear that its abolition would create popular anger. Finally, the Constitution created a permanent offensive-defensive alliance with France, a provision that practically guaranteed opposition from most Spaniards.⁶⁸

The most important element of the Constitution, because it came the closest to being implemented, was the structure of the new government, adopted from the Consulate. There were a similar number of ministries covering similar portfolios, and presided over by the Council of State.⁶⁹ As in France, the ministries were to directly execute both the laws and the orders of the sovereign. This was a significant change from the Bourbon's haphazard administration.

The Council of State was given the task of debating laws proposed by the king, suggesting changes, resolving issues of jurisdiction between ministries, drawing up the annual budget, and dealing with "the general regulations of public administration."⁷⁰ Presided over by the monarch, it was again a copy of the French Council (with sections for Finance, Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs, Interior and Police, War, and Marine).⁷¹ In theory, all bills and decrees

Freedom of the Press.

⁶⁸ Article 124.

⁶⁹ Articles 27-31 of the Bayonne Constitution defined the powers and functions of the various ministries. For a discussion of their functions, see Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 124-46.

⁷⁰ Article 58. Articles 52-56 of the Bayonne Constitution described the organization of the Council of State, and who would serve on it. Articles 57-60 described the functions of the council.

⁷¹ In May 1809, the portfolios for War and Marine were merged. The French Council of State included an additional portfolio for Commerce. Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 227.

once discussed were to be sent to the national Cortès. Since the latter was never created, Spain was in fact ruled by royal decree.

It was not until July 1808 that Joseph appointed thirteen Spaniards Counselors of State. (Laforest approved of the king's choices, which included Pablo Arribas, one of the members of Laforest's French Party.)⁷² When Joseph was forced to abandon Madrid in August, only seven went with him. On his return in December, he appointed new ones. The final number of thirty counselors was finally achieved in May 1809, when the Council had its first meeting.⁷³ It opened with an almost inspired speech by the king, expressing all he hoped might be accomplished for the nation:

Individual egotism will cease... and the entire nation once settled into peace, will be able to enjoy the benefits of a constitution which circumscribes the rights of the throne, while assuring the rights of the people... civil liberties and national independence will make all the peoples who today continue to divide Spain, into a single nation... It will be a happy day when Castilians, Aragonese, Catalans and Andalusians forget their differences... [and replace those names with] that of Spaniards.⁷⁴

Laforest had similar high hopes. He believed that through the Council, Joseph might yet command and reform Spain.⁷⁵

The new administration's first year was its most productive. The Council met nineteen

⁷² Laforest to Champagny. July 26, 1808, in Laforest, I, 190-1.

⁷³ For a list of the council's members, see "Tableau 32: Chronologie des conseillers d'Etat (jusqu'en mai 1809)," in Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 222-3. Eight of the ministers were supposed to sit on the council, and were to receive a salary of 100,000 reales, supplemented by monetary gifts (usually in *vales reales*) from the king. Minute du décret date 13 mai 1809, Archivo General de Simancas [henceforth cited as A.G.S.], Gracia y Justicia, liasse 1088, cited in Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 227.

⁷⁴ A.N. 381 AP 13, dossier 1, pièce 52, cited in Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 225.

⁷⁵ Laforest to Champagny. July 6, 1808, in Laforest, I, 143-4.

times.⁷⁶ In one meeting in August 1809 it ordered the suppression of some religious orders and the seizure of their property, but also the arrest of all those who chose to fight against the king.⁷⁷ It also instituted several key measures reorganizing government finances. Joseph even began to rely on some of his counselors to implement other reforms as well. (The Count de Saint Anastase for example was given the task of reorganizing the national postal system.) The Council then entered a period of relative inactivity.

Laforest was otherwise disappointed in it, since its discussions were not like the freewheeling debates that characterized Napoleon's Council; but then again, he reflected, the emperor and Joseph were very different rulers.⁷⁸ Joseph, far less forceful than his brother, recoiled from any opposition, and so declined to give it full rein. He much preferred his smaller Privy Council, which, being filled with sycophants, was less willing to challenge his decisions.⁷⁹

It is painful to see, Laforest wrote to Champagny, the growing distance between [the authority of the State Council] and the king. How many useful measures are delayed! This includes the further reorganization of the public treasury...⁸⁰

He was almost certainly right that the Council of State, with the greater variety of opinion

⁷⁶ "Tableau 34: Fréquence des réunions du conseil d'Etat en 1809," in Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 232. This was between May and December 1809. The French Council of State in contrast met almost every day during Napoleon's reign and he often participated in its meetings.

⁷⁷ The council also discussed a decree (which was later implemented) that would recognize only the noble titles that Joseph had conferred. Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 237-8.

⁷⁸ Laforest to Champagny. May 28, 1809, in Laforest, II, 265; Laforest to Champagny. May 30, 1809, in Laforest, II, 266.

⁷⁹ Laforest to Champagny. May 20, 1810, in Laforest, III, 392-3. Joseph appears to have preferred the more relaxed and intimate atmosphere of the Privy Council, which only included those who the king had invited. In contrast, all members of the Council of State had to sit in on a meeting if they were available.

⁸⁰ Laforest to Champagny. October 1, 1809, in Laforest, III, 3-5.

represented in it, would have been a more effective means of governing than the Privy Council, with its restricted membership.⁸¹ Just as Laforest feared, the Council of State met only eleven times in the last quarter of 1809, and only nine times in all of 1810.⁸² (He was also concerned that the Privy Council would be used to restrict information about proposed laws, thus reducing his own ability to influence them.) Much to Laforest's chagrin, Joseph continued rely on the smaller council to deal with important matters.

There were other reasons as well for Joseph's choice. While the ambassador remained convinced that a complete adoption of the French system of government would bring important benefits, the king, seeking greater independence from Paris, chose not to deal too much with Laforest's allies at court. Torn between the demands of Napoleon and Joseph, the ambassador could only watch as the Madrid government adopted practices he considered counter-productive to the establishment of a stable, pro-French government.

In one area, however, Laforest was most effective. That was propaganda.

The Propaganda War in Spain

Laforest, instructed by Joachim Murat, understood the importance of propaganda, and his role in it, from the time he entered Spain.⁸³ He therefore quickly took charge of the

⁸¹ Ferdinand VII would abolish the Council of State that had been instituted by the Constitution of Cadiz in 1814. A Royal Council with functions similar to the Council was however reintroduced by the Constitution of 1845. In 1858, this body again took the name of "the Council of State." It continues to serve as the central decision-making body of the bureaucracy of Spain today. Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 265.

⁸² Magescas, "Le gouvernement central," 239-40.

⁸³ According to Murat's letter to Napoleon dated April 21, 1808: "I have communicated to M. Laforest your

government's official newspaper, the *Gaceta de Madrid*, and proposed that great efforts be made to circulate it around the peninsula.⁸⁴ Laforest also had two French and two Spanish inspectors working under the direction of the Police Ministry to ensure no other newspaper in the capital contradicted its reports.⁸⁵ In most respects, Laforest followed the tropes used by the French press to describe the Peninsular War, Joseph's Spanish enemies, and the *Afrancesados*.⁸⁶ These were, first, that French victory, despite some setbacks, was inevitable, and second, that Joseph's enemies were murderous partisans of an antiquated and despotic Spain dominated by the Inquisition. Third the British were described as interfering in Spain in order to reduce the country to a state of economic subjugation; and fourth, the *Afrancesados* were enlightened liberals embodying truth and reason, and the only Spaniards worthy of national support. Even the government's flight to Vitoria in 1808 did not slow his work. There he quickly established two new newspapers, the *Gaceta de la Cour* and the *Gaceta de Vitoria*. Laforest's most ambitious goal was to present not only Spanish, but also foreign news from the French point of view. He also tried to counter rumors, spread by the rebel juntas, about Joseph's alleged corruption.⁸⁷ Most of all, he wanted his readers to have the impression that most of the

majesty's desire that he shape public opinion through pamphlets." Murat [Madrid] to Napoleon, April 21, 1808, cited in Laforest, I, III.

⁸⁴ It was eventually even distributed by French troops. Laforest to Champagny. June 12, 1808, in Laforest, I, 77; and December 12, 1809, in Laforest, III, 118-9.

⁸⁵ Laforest to Champagny. June 1, 1808, in Laforest, I, 55-6.

⁸⁶ For an analysis of these tropes, see Jean-René Aymes, «La Guerre d'Espagne dans la presse imperiale (1808-1814),» in *A.H.R.F.* Numéro 336 (avril-juin 2004): 129-45. The only trope Laforest did not use was the depiction of Joseph's opponents as apostles of the French Republic's Reign of Terror.

⁸⁷ Laforest to Champagny. September 5, 1808, in Laforest, I, 260.

population had already accepted Joseph as their legitimate ruler.⁸⁸ Thus, he announced in December 1808 that more than 28,000 heads of households (out of an official population of 156,672) had already signed a petition declaring fealty to Joseph.⁸⁹ (These numbers might have been not far off the mark, considering the quick distribution of bread by the French just a few days before.)⁹⁰ Laforest continued these efforts in the *Gaceta de Madrid* as soon as he returned to the capital in December, making sure to send every issue to Champagny.⁹¹

Laforest also began to send special news bulletins to Paris along with his usual correspondence. These were for the eyes of the minister and the emperor alone. In them it was clear that Laforest shared Napoleon's belief that public opinion was shaped by the notables. These he believed could be won over by military successes.⁹² Yet at the same time he warned that excesses committed by the French armies would only increase popular resistance.⁹³ Laforest told how the "enlightened classes" had been impressed by the emperor's power. The rest of Spain, he concluded, would rally to the new government out of fear.⁹⁴

Laforest's tight control of the *Gaceta* soon caused additional conflict with Joseph and his ministers. The king complained to his brother that, "I have not been able to publish a single

⁸⁸ See for example, "Extract of the *Gazette de la Cour*." August 28, 1808. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 676, fol. 151-2.

⁸⁹ Laforest to Champagny. December 25, 1808, in Laforest, I, 415. The numbers for the petition are reported in Cortada, 127.

⁹⁰ "Bulletin de Madrid No. 4." December 17, 1808, in Laforest, I, 400.

⁹¹ Laforest to Champagny. December 10, 1808, in Laforest, I, 380.

⁹² "Bulletin de Madrid No. 1." December 9, 1808, in Laforest, I, 382-8.

⁹³ "Bulletin de Madrid No. 2." December 12, 1808, in Laforest, I, 391-6.

⁹⁴ "Bulletin de Madrid No. 3." December 14, 1808, in Laforest, I, 397. Laforest again used the term "éclairées."

article about French victories without the officers working for M. de Laforest saying I had no right [to do so] without his permission.”⁹⁵ This was even after Laforest was supposed to have ceded direct control of the *Gaceta* to the Spanish Police Ministry.⁹⁶ The ambassador continued to regularly insert proclamations and bulletins as directed by the French Foreign Ministry into the *Gaceta*, while also authoring many articles himself. These included a letter purportedly sent to Joseph by a former *guerrillero* in which he renounced his allegiance to the rebels and swore loyalty to the king.

Laforest also made good use of Napoleon’s victories in the 1809 campaign. Copies of the emperor’s dispatches were inserted regularly into the *Gaceta* during that spring. The ambassador was again lucky in September, when an intercepted letter from the British ambassador to the junta spoke of infighting among the rebels. This was promptly published in the *Gaceta*. According to Laforest, the Junta was already regretting not having entered into negotiations with Joseph before Austria’s defeat. This was doubtless an exaggeration.⁹⁷ It was however useful in creating dissension in the ranks of the rebels. So was his claim that Wellington had abandoned the Spanish to defeat at the battle of Ocaña.⁹⁸ It was clear that

⁹⁵ Joseph [Pardo] to Napoleon. January 19, 1809, cited in Haegele, *Napoléon & Joseph: Correspondance*, 641.

⁹⁶ See Laforest to Champagny. January 21, 1809, in Laforest, II, 2-3.

⁹⁷ Laforest to Champagny. September 30, 1809, in Laforest, II, 454. Laforest reported in December that the negotiations could not have been expected to go anywhere. Laforest to Champagny. December 28, 1809, in Laforest, III, 152; Laforest to Champagny. October 9, 1809, in Laforest, III, 17-20. The duke of Wellington was of course still commander of British forces in the peninsula. Although many contemporaries believed that Wellington supported or even directed plots within the insurgents’ ranks, subsequent evidence suggests the plotters had no connection with the British.

⁹⁸ Laforest to Champagny. November 26, 1809, in Laforest, III, 97.

Laforest would have liked to have had an even greater say in running the *Gaceta*. He was convinced that only he could present the emperor's position with sufficient force, or clarity, and would later claim to have been disappointed when the Madrid government did not do more on its own to publicize French military successes in Spain and Austria.⁹⁹

His frustration would only increase. In March of 1810, Laforest noted angrily that even Arribas, the supposed leader of Laforest's pro-French party, had refused to allow him to insert an article from *Le Moniteur* that stated "the prime duty of a French prince placed in the line of succession to the imperial throne, is [submission] to that throne,"¹⁰⁰ Arribas insisted the article demeaned the king's honor and independence. Resistance from those in whom he placed the greatest trust continued to remind him (and us) of the delicate balance he had to maintain between Napoleon, Joseph, and his own friends at court. Even as adept a diplomat as Laforest sometimes found this exceptionally difficult.

Laforest even used his embassy's 1809 celebration of the emperor's birthday in his propaganda war. After a *Te Deum* attended by Joseph and the court, he hosted a ball accompanied by fireworks and several hundred-gun salutes. Laforest sat at the place of honor on the king's right.¹⁰¹ Such grand entertainments had always been encouraged by Napoleon as a means of displaying French power and wealth to the elites he was most anxious to win over. He insisted that his embassies outdo all others in the expense and grandeur of their celebrations.¹⁰²

Laforest was less successful in fighting the insurgents' own propaganda. It had been

⁹⁹ See for example, Laforest to Champagny. June 14, 1809, in Laforest, II, 282-4.

¹⁰⁰ Haegele, *Napoleon et Joseph*, 399. The original article was from *Le Moniteur Universel*, February 22, 1810, cited in Haegele, *Napoleon et Joseph*, 399.

¹⁰¹ Laforest to Champagny. August 16, 1809, in Laforest, II, 366-9.

¹⁰² Whitcomb, 95-6.

widely spread about that the king was a drunkard. Spanish caricaturists and playwrights nicknamed him *Don Pepé Botella* (literally “Pepe the Drunkard”). The fact that Joseph was not much of a drinker had no effect, and the name became part of Joseph’s popular image.¹⁰³

Other efforts were more dangerous, as when Laforest’s letters, as well as those of Joseph’s ministers, were published in October of 1810.¹⁰⁴ It thus became widely known that Napoleon had rejected Madrid’s request that payments for the French armies be reduced. This in turn produced widespread fears that future violations of Spanish sovereignty were in store. Even worse, the letters became the subject of much discussion by the *Afrancesados*.¹⁰⁵ Laforest could do little to repair the damage in the eyes of a population that already had little reason to trust the French.¹⁰⁶

Within days, Laforest reported in a panic that the newspapers in Cadiz had published additional letters. These he suspected had been in dispatches taken by the *guerrilleros* in early July.¹⁰⁷ To counter this, Laforest sent duplicates to Paris, so that the Foreign Ministry could coordinate efforts against whatever use the insurgents chose to make of them.

The Junta became more adept over time. By 1813, they were widely disseminating

¹⁰³ Michael Ross. *The Reluctant King: Joseph Bonaparte, King of the Two Sicilies and Spain*, (New York: Mason/Charter, 1977), 158-9.

¹⁰⁴ The efforts of the *guerrilleros* to capture couriers and their packets was encouraged by bounties the British placed on every dispatch turned over to them, though the contribution of intelligence gathered by such methods in the French defeat has been exaggerated. Cortada, 16.

¹⁰⁵ Laforest to Champagny. October 5, 9 and 13, 1810, in Laforest IV, 165, 170, 175-7.

¹⁰⁶ The original letter can be found in: Santa Fe [Paris] to Campo-Alange. June 19, 1810. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 682, fol. 309-14.

¹⁰⁷ Laforest to Champagny. October 16, 1810, in Laforest, IV, 180-1.

reports, purportedly from Laforest, discussing French plans for the further dismemberment of Spain.¹⁰⁸ The ambassador was quick to dismiss these as obvious forgeries.¹⁰⁹ Laforest's denials probably convinced few, since the Spanish public always tended to believe the worst when it came to French designs, usually with good reason. In the end, Laforest simply could not overcome the negative image that the events of Bayonne had first established in the minds of most Spaniards.

Propaganda cannot win wars, and it certainly did not do so in Spain. Those Spaniards who chose to serve in the Madrid government were already inclined towards the French, either because they believed it was better for Spain to submit than to resist, or because they believed that changes under French auspices was the only way to reform the country. It seems unlikely that the ambassador's propaganda convinced many members of the resistance, or more importantly, the majority of Spaniards, who simply wished the foreign invaders gone.

Conclusion: Laforest and the Bonapartist Kingdom of Spain

From 1808 to 1813, the Comte de Laforest acted with great skill to ensure that the policies and goals set for him by his superiors were carried out. Whatever his task, he saw himself as the primary spokesman and civilian executor of French imperial policy in Spain. He

¹⁰⁸ Santa Fe [Valladolid] to Laforest. April 28, 1813. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 691, fol. 175-6.

¹⁰⁹ Laforest [Valladolid] to Santa Fe. April 29, 1813. AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 691, fol. 176-7. The ambassador pointed out that the letter was addressed from Valencia, a place he had never visited, and was signed «comte de Laforest», whereas he invariably signed his letters, «Laforest.» In addition, it was addressed to Champagny, who had been replaced by the duc de Bassano in 1811. Since there is no letter of that date in Laforest's correspondence in the AAE, it seems safe to conclude that the letter was indeed a forgery. In any event, Laforest would have been too wise to put such thoughts in his correspondence.

was also one of the key individuals in Madrid who could keep Napoleon's demands, Joseph's reticence, French military aggressiveness, and *Afrancesados* aspirations (and doubts) in balance. This kept Joseph on his throne, and his ministers sufficiently appeased to give Spain a semblance of independent government.

For Napoleon, reform was a minor matter. This was true even in Spain, where he justified the overthrow of the Bourbons in the name of reform. The efforts of the *Afrancesados* to use French power in order to introduce the domestic reforms they wanted, although well meaning, were a failure because they began too late. Trying to introduce major changes in the middle of the Peninsular War was certainly foolhardy, especially considering the government's lack of resources. This only inspired more popular resistance to Joseph, while angering powerful vested interests. These included nobility and clergy defending their economic and political privileges, as well as peasants and artisans hoping to keep the traditional rights, or *fueros*, they enjoyed in their own provinces. Joseph's government spent too much time discussing divisive issues, when effort would have been better spent on solving its financial difficulties.

One important distinction between Otto and Laforest was the greater role the latter played in reforming the satellite in which he was stationed. This was only natural. The Bavarian state, although subordinate to Napoleon, was founded on the traditional Wittelsbach monarchy. Joseph's government was Napoleon's creation imposed on Spain, while it might have seemed this would make Laforest's work easier, it in fact made it more difficult. Max Joseph already had the loyalty of his people. Joseph had to wind the support of at least some of his subjects. Laforest, trying to appease the *Afrancesados* in the face of Napoleon's callousness, was one of the few people who could help him. It was in order to appease as much as direct that the ambassador regularly consulted with the king's ministers during the attempts to introduce a new

judiciary and Council of State. His advice helped shape the resulting law code. More importantly, it showed French support of judicial reform. At the same time, his intervention was designed to force the Spanish government to adhere to Napoleon's dictates.

The evidence suggests that the *Afrancesados* were right in placing some confidence in the imperial system. It is true that Napoleon ran roughshod over Spain, as he did the rest of Europe, and tried to run the empire by decree. He was cunning enough to introduce mock constitutions, along with some genuine civil liberties in the satellite kingdoms. But this still left much to be done at the local level. It was one thing to decree the creation of a liberal Spain that was supposed to win the support of a mostly conservative population. It was another to find collaborators who could implement specific reforms among a people steeped in tradition, and suspicious of both foreigners and the Enlightenment. As with Otto, Laforest understood that he needed the *Afrancesados* for the imperial system to run smoothly. Joseph also understood this, and the conflict with his brother reflected the king's more sophisticated understanding of the need for local helpers. The ferocity of their disagreements illustrated how much Napoleon still had to learn.

Laforest could have been his teacher. A supporter of the empire's exploitation of conquered lands, he also understood more could be gained by persuasion than by terror. Neither Laforest (nor Otto) seem to have had preconceived plans about transforming Spain (or Bavaria) before they took up their assignments. But they learned. Reform was not the primary goal of the Napoleonic Empire. Exploitation was. French support of reforms initiated by the satellite governments was a necessary by-product of imperial rule for efficient exploitation. The ambassadors needed collaborators. The price of these willing tools was reform. Laforest and Otto were both willing to pay it. They either actively worked to implement reforms, or at the very least provided protection for those who did.

Napoleon, in contrast, was a soldier. In both his military and personal affairs, he regarded

people, including close friends and family, largely as objects to achieve his own ends. There is little evidence that he had any deep feeling for the foreign (or French) dead on the battlefield. Although this brutal attitude brought victory on many campaigns, it did not make the exploitation of the satellites easier. Happily for him, he had men like Laforest and Otto to manipulate them to do his bidding. It was diplomats such as these, through their own initiatives, skill and imagination, that made them truly proconsular figures, able to make the empire work. Laforest's work in particular demonstrates how the imperial system could not function in the face of sudden crises without the creative initiative of someone like him.

Laforest understood some of the reasons for the failure of the Madrid government: its inability to convince most Spanish people of Joseph's legitimacy, or to resolve its financial problems. This was compounded by Napoleon's unwillingness to allow the government to rule most of Spain without interference from his generals. The ambassador also understood that Joseph's efforts to assert his independence from Napoleon were bound to fail (a failure to which Laforest himself contributed), in light of the emperor's insistence that the Peninsular War pay for itself. Joseph's only realistic choice therefore was, first, to cooperate fully with his brother in winning the war, and then to try to win the Spanish by conciliatory policies and reform. Whatever hopes Joseph and his ministers had for a more equitable post-war relationship, the great Napoleonic project in Spain was still dependent on military success. It collapsed completely with the expulsion of the imperial armies from most of the country in 1813.

Laforest usually achieved his civilian-based policy goals. (He failed when it came to obtaining the cooperation of the French military, which had become a law unto itself.) He was certainly able during his five years in Spain to keep Joseph and the *Afrancesados* obedient to Paris. The commercial treaties he negotiated were another triumph. Overall, his embassy was a

model of how a satellite government could be managed under the most difficult circumstances. His greatest error was in believing, like Napoleon, that a few thousand notables could transform the country. The contrast with Bavaria, where the population (with the exception of the Tyrol) acquiesced to reform, is striking.

All that remains is to consider the lasting effect of the Bonapartist kingdom on Spain's subsequent history and politics.¹¹⁰ Ferdinand's return in 1814 had followed six years of devastating war that had left the country exhausted, and parts depopulated. The new king, supported by conservative members of the Church, nobility and army known as the *serviles* (a moniker given to them by liberal Spaniards who claimed they preferred slavery to liberty), almost immediately staged a *coup* to unseat the Junta liberals who had written the 1812 Cadiz Constitution. Royal absolutism was restored, and reforms introduced under French auspices reversed. Some privileges of the Church and nobility were re-established. The Constitution was repudiated, and all legislation passed by the Cortès of Cadiz was declared void. Yet even Ferdinand could go only so far. He did not dare restore disentailed lands to its former owners.¹¹¹ He also kept the French administrative reforms that had strengthened the central government, including the Council of State as the main decision-making body of the monarchy.¹¹² The more rational (and relatively progressive) system of taxation introduced by Joseph that had in addition been supported by the Cadiz government was also maintained.¹¹³ Ferdinand even began to assert

¹¹⁰ For an examination of the influence of the Napoleonic era on Spain, see Charles Esdaile, "Enlightened Absolutism versus Theocracy in the Spanish Restoration, 1814-1850," in *Napoleon's Legacy: Problems of Government in Restoration Europe*, 65-81.

¹¹¹ Esdaile, "Enlightened Absolutism versus Theocracy," 74.

¹¹² Esdaile, "Enlightened Absolutism versus Theocracy," 76.

¹¹³ Esdaile, "Enlightened Absolutism versus Theocracy," 74-5.

his royal prerogatives over the Church by nominating bishops. His one great failure was the inability to restore Spain's colonial empire. With the exception of Cuba, the Philippines and a few small islands, it was lost forever, a long term calamity that left his government unable to cover its expenses.

In the longer term, Joseph's regime and the Cadiz Constitution had together established liberalism as a viable political movement. Ironically, some of the *guerrilleros* who had fought the French began to contrast Joseph's policies favorably with Ferdinand's absolutist rule.¹¹⁴ By the 1830s, Spanish bureaucrats and reformers than ever began to consider Napoleonic France as a positive model for further reform, especially once a general amnesty in 1833 was extended to the remaining exiled *Afrancesados*.¹¹⁵ The Spanish introduced a new system of administration in 1839, similar to France's prefectural system that had first been planned under Joseph. Lasagra, a pro-English deputy in the Cortès, criticized these influences, saying "By what right should France be raised up in administrative circles as a model... [and] have its administrative organization imposed on us."¹¹⁶ Additional examples of the Napoleonic model's influence on reform can be seen in the 1829 commercial code, as well as in the creation of a Madrid stock market in 1831.¹¹⁷ For the next century, liberal and traditional factions would struggle over which vision of Spain would triumph. It ended in civil war.

¹¹⁴ The real grievance of many former *guerrilleros* was that they were cashiered when the Spanish army was demobilized after 1814 in favor of nobly-born officers. Esdaile, *Fighting Napoleon*, 188-92; and Esdaile, "Enlightened Absolutism versus Theocracy," 72-3, 76-7.

¹¹⁵ Jean-Philippe Luis, «L'Influence du modèle napoléonien en Espagne (1814-1845),» in *A.H.R.F.* No. 336 (avril-juin 2004): 199-219. The amnesty decree was promulgated in the last months of Ferdinand's life.

¹¹⁶ Cited in Luis, 208.

¹¹⁷ Luis, 215.

These outcomes were of course still unimagined when the Napoleonic Empire ended in 1814. The concluding chapter will focus more broadly on what the evidence of the two case studies has demonstrated about the Napoleonic Empire, and on the role of France's diplomats in it.

Chapter Ten: Conclusions

Histories of empires have generally tended to describe them as top-down organizations, dwelling on the role of a Napoleon or a Caesar in their creation and administration. However, if one looks closely at how the Napoleonic Empire actually worked, it is clear that some of the most important actors within it were the diplomats who acted as intermediaries between the France and its subordinate nations. These ambassadors acted as imperial proconsuls—dictating how the satellites were to conform to Paris’ demands, and ensuring that they remained obedient allies despite the terrible burdens they were obliged to bear. Most importantly, they were able to find local collaborators, without whose assistance the administration of the empire would have been impossible. This dissertation has examined the careers of two of Napoleon’s ambassadors as a means of understanding of how the Napoleonic Empire actually worked. From these examples, and the policies they enforced, several important conclusions can be drawn.

First, both ambassadors operated in a relatively similar manner despite important differences between Bavaria and Spain. Second, they both worked to enforce the intensive economic and military exploitation upon which the empire was based. Third, both ambassadors used all of their diplomatic skills to mediate between Paris and its subordinate regimes to render French policies less overtly oppressive.

As France’s leader after 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte’s predilection for using military force to solve diplomatic problems dominated his foreign policy. This led him to use the threat of force to extract as many soldiers and money from the satellites as possible. It was this policy, so pregnant with danger for the empire that both Otto and Laforest had to both reshape, and disguise.

Fourth, the ambassadors played a primary role in drafting treaties that opened up the

Bavarian and Spanish markets to French goods on advantageous terms. Napoleon had made the promotion of France's commercial supremacy a diplomatic priority. This was accomplished through unequal trade treaties, buttressed by the restrictions of the Continental System. The satellites were forced to lower their tariffs, while the French maintained theirs at levels designed to prevent the products of the satellites from reaching the *metropole*. This success would lead to a greater demand for French products among the former satellites long after the collapse of the empire.

It was France's ambassadors who, after 1799, were the primary mediators in the relationship between their country and the satellites. Their task was constant: maintaining the subordination of the satellites, and making sure their exploitation ran smoothly. Both Laforest and Otto were highly effective in both areas. They had to be. Exploitation was rarely curtailed, even when it drove both nations to the brink of bankruptcy. Even when the ambassadors made great efforts to obtain loans for them, this was ultimately designed to provide additional monies that would flow back to Paris. Some effort was made to placate their leaders, but little was done to alleviate the burdens placed on them. Napoleon himself was almost always unyielding, fearing that easing the burden on one satellite would set a bad precedent for the others.

Both Otto and Laforest realized over the course of their embassies that exploitation, if taken too far, would hopelessly weaken the satellite collaborationist governments, or else move them to consider breaking openly with the Napoleonic Empire. France's population of over thirty million could not by itself provide all the manpower to occupy half of Europe in the face of sustained opposition. It was only indirect rule that allowed the empire to survive and expand. Laforest and Otto understood this far better than Napoleon. This was why they insisted that a French financial subsidy to each government, or at least the easing of financial pressures, was

necessary to keep them loyal to France. Napoleon's response to these requests, and the vehemence with which he in general opposed reducing exploitation, only demonstrates how little he understood the means by which the cooperation of these all important collaborators was achieved. Accustomed after years of campaigning to giving orders, he never seemed to understand that civilian leaders of even militarily weaker powers could not be handled like soldiers on a battlefield. And although a subsidy was extended to Spain in the later years of Laforest's embassy, this was given only because of the special relationship between Joseph and the emperor. This is made even clearer when one notes that the only other sizable subsidy was given to the Kingdom of Naples between 1806 and 1808 when Joseph was ruler there.

It is also clear that the export of French-style reforms was a minor concern of Napoleon and the Foreign Ministry. France's diplomats were usually instructed to waste little energy advocating them. The only exception was in those areas effecting military and the administration that were designed to produce additional manpower and financial resources. Since this helped meet his military needs, Napoleon's actions only further support the argument that exploitation, and not reform, was his primary aim.

Spain was in some ways an exception to this rule. Here, Laforest worked closely with members of the Madrid government to create a legal system based on the Code Napoleon. (This is not entirely surprising. Joseph's monarchy was Napoleon's creation. This same kind of direct interference would be found again in Westphalia. But there, it was not only Jerome's monarchy, but the state itself, that were French creations.) Yet even in the case of Spain, the ultimate French aim was to create a stronger Spanish state that could be used for larger French aims, not only in Europe, but in the Americas. Paris planners were certain that Spain's colonial empire, better administered by a reformed Madrid government, would be an arena in which French merchants

could make enormous profits. Napoleon himself saw that empire as a means of challenging British naval supremacy, while also to some degree restoring France's vast overseas possessions lost in the eighteenth century. In Spain as well, therefore, the more energetic pursuit of reform was only another means to further exploitation.

But if reform was not the primary goal of the Napoleonic Empire, it was through this that the relationship between the imperial *metropole* and the satellites was cemented. French support of reform was what the satellite governments gained most from in their relationship with Paris. In Bavaria, mediatization would never have succeeded without France's diplomatic and military support. Without the French presence, Bavaria's other reforms could not have been so swiftly or so extensively accomplished. In Spain, it was French support, in the face of so much popular hostility, that bound the *Afrancesados* so closely to Joseph (and his brother). The determined desire of collaborators to effect significant changes was so strong that they were willing to accept the burdens of exploitation in return as a tacit *quid pro quo*.

The real impetus for reform came from those enlightened Bavarians and Spaniards who were anxious to use Napoleon's dominance as a means to overcome local resistance. Montgelas' plans for reform had been drawn up in 1795, before most of Europe had even heard of Napoleon Bonaparte. In Spain, Joseph's reforms were based on plans Bourbon reformers had hoped to implement decades before the French invasion. It is certainly true that reforms were accomplished far more quickly during the period of French dominance than at any other time. The Napoleonic reforms should thus be seen not as a brief, transformative period of modernization, abruptly cut short in 1814, but as part of a larger continuum made irresistible by the French imperium. And yet, one might well wonder if the revolutions of 1848, with their hope and promise for future generations, could have been possible without the legacy of the

Napoleonic Empire as a catalyst for reform.

Otto and Laforest themselves were two of the most successful diplomats in their ability to manage and manipulate the satellite governments to which they were posted. They were able to do this by constantly adapting to local conditions and the governments with which they were obliged to work. On some occasions, this even necessitated their ignoring direct orders from Paris, either because they were outdated, or, more importantly, simply wrong for the situation. Otto and Laforest usually had a better understanding of local conditions than any Parisian bureaucrat, and so could act more effectively to soften demands, or placate concerns of a satellite. They used persuasion to convince local leaders that exploitation was not as bad as it appeared, while also holding out the possibility that it would be alleviated in the future. This kept the Bavarian population from active resistance. In the case of Spain, Laforest, while unable to persuade the mass of the population, went far beyond the limits of any normal ambassador in keeping Joseph's government from collapsing. Although Napoleon would undoubtedly have preferred to turn each diplomat into a dutiful enforcer of the imperial system, executing policies handed down from on high, their individual initiative and skill made his continuing success possible. Although Laforest may have written disingenuously about simply carrying out the emperor's orders, in truth, he was his own man, responding to each situation as he, and not Napoleon, saw fit.

Far from being mere cogs in the imperial machine, the ambassadors forged key relationships with important collaborators within the satellite governments. They inevitably became close to the monarchs, or at least the ministers, with whom they worked. This made them more sympathetic to their needs. But it also allowed them to exercise necessary influence at crucial moments. In the case of Otto, for example, the close association he formed with

Montgelas and Max Joseph early in his embassy greatly eased the initial entry of Bavaria into the empire.

Finally, both ambassadors, despite very different backgrounds, showed genuine sympathy for the satellites in which they worked. Although it is not surprising that Otto, a German by birth, should express sympathy for Bavaria, Laforest, a Frenchman, was equally willing to call for a lessening of his nation's military excesses, even if only to make Joseph's rule more secure. It was probably unavoidable for a proconsul to empathize at least a little with the collaborators with whom he was working. In addition, the unceasing complaints they received from their collaborators seems in the end to have had some effect. The idea of an enlightened, progressive empire was more in their minds than in that of Napoleon, no matter what the latter would claim while on St. Helena.

More fundamentally, the evidence demonstrates a more responsive empire than historians have previously imagined, with ambassadors attempting to at least partially tailor, and moderate, policies to each satellite government, rather than strictly enforcing Parisian decrees. The ambassadors used their initiative to defend the imperial system. But they also helped define it. Certainly, exploitation would not have been as effective without their diligent work. They made the continuing existence of the Napoleonic Empire possible by convincing the satellite governments that they were all working together to make a more enlightened, liberal Europe. Although not in ways originally intended, they were.

The Fate of the Napoleonic Diplomatic Corps and the Empire's Legacy in Europe

The Napoleonic Empire had been based above all on military strength. What had taken more than ten years to create was quickly swept away following Napoleon's disastrous defeat in

Russia. The empire assumed new burdens in 1813 with the conscription of an entirely new army, to replace that lost in the snows of Russia. Wellington had already pushed the French almost entirely out of Spain, but it was in Germany that the decisive confrontation took place. In October 1813, 200,000 soldiers (including thousands of Germans, Poles, Belgians, Dutch, and Italians) under Napoleon's command faced more than 350,000 Austrian, Russian, Swedish, and Prussian soldiers at Leipzig, in the appropriately named "Battle of the Nations." By early 1814, Napoleon had been forced to retreat once again (during which the 43,000-man strong Bavarian army that attempted to block him was smashed). Once the coalition armies crossed the Rhine, Napoleon's empire largely ceased to exist. The remaining satellites defected to the allies, or were overrun.

There was joy in the former satellites when peace was restored. Most people were happy that the burden of French exploitation had been lifted, leaving only a minority to mourn the emperor's fall. And yet, it was soon realized that the Napoleonic experience had profoundly transformed the satellites. It had allowed them to introduce reforms that had furthered the emergence of a more centralized state, and eliminated corporate bodies that had slowed economic development.

Bavaria managed to emerge from the collapse with both its territory and reforms intact. Max Joseph and Montgelas had supported Napoleon until just before Leipzig, when the latter negotiated a treaty that ensured both the kingdom and its 1809 constitution would survive. Montgelas would later write that he had hoped Napoleon would have given up his conquests in exchange for peace. This would have allowed France to maintain a "great influence in German affairs, which would have done much to establish Germany's independence [against Austria]." Max Joseph too would later (at least privately) express regret that he had been forced to betray

him. Although many historians have referred to the 1813 campaign as Germany's "War of Liberation," the Bavarian government had only participated reluctantly in the invasion of France. Significantly, there was no massive revolt of Bavarian public opinion against the reforms that had taken place under French auspices.

Napoleon's diplomats themselves emerged from the empire with excellent administrative skills that served them well in post-war France. Under the Restoration, twenty-seven of his diplomats sat in the Chamber of Peers, and an additional twelve in the Chamber of Deputies. Of these, sixteen peers and eleven deputies had previously served in the satellites. Ten would continue in parliament under the July Monarchy.

Laforest was among these. Having begun as President of the Electoral College of the Loir-et-Cher during the Restoration, he was named a hereditary peer in 1819, and, in 1825-26, Minister of State and Privy Councilor. One might suspect that the experience he gained dealing with Joseph's councils served him well in these posts. (It should be noted that his grandson, Lionel de Moustier, would later serve as Foreign Minister from 1866 to 1868, appropriately under Napoleon III).

Following his death, Laforest fell into obscurity even among diplomatic historians. It was only in 1905, that Geoffroy de Grandmaison began to publish the correspondence of Laforest's embassy. Since then Laforest's reports have become one of the primary sources for those who study the Bonapartist Kingdom of Spain.

As for Otto, he did not have the time to establish a post-Napoleonic career, dying in 1817. As one of the few foreigners in the Foreign Ministry, he did not in any case have the contacts necessary to move easily into government service. It is also possible that Otto's previous sponsorship by the Abbé Sieyès (a prominent figure of the Revolution, and one who

had voted for the death of Louis XVI) hurt his prospects after 1815.

The post-Napoleonic Foreign Ministry largely kept the same organization until the 1930s. With no European satellites to deal with, it returned to traditional diplomacy. Skills diplomats had acquired in learning how to run an empire were not useful in a Europe that was trying to forget its Napoleonic past. And while one can find many connections between Napoleon's military and the generals who led the invasion of Algeria in 1830, the Foreign Ministry played no important role in the new empire. (Algeria began as a colony, and later evolved into several French departments.) Ironically, it was not until France's defeat by Germany in 1940 that Napoleonic style diplomacy would again be seen in Europe, with Ambassador Otto Abetz playing a key role in the German occupation of France. Laforest and Otto would undoubtedly have found much that was familiar in the way Abetz and the Germans manipulated and exploited the country, but also, in German policies of enslavement and genocide, much that was antithetical to the empire they had served.

The Napoleonic era represents a fascinating period in the diplomatic history of France and Europe. Additional studies of how elites in the satellites themselves viewed, and responded to, the empire, still wait to be written. The examples of Laforest and Otto also suggest that there are ambassadorial careers waiting to be explored that will provide more insights into the workings of the Napoleonic system, with its curious amalgam of exploitation and reform. It is one of the great ironies of history that the empire, with all its abuses, may have furthered the cause of reform, and made an undeniably great contribution to the European evolution towards freedom.

Appendices

Appendix I: Biographical Essays on the Important Officials of the Satellite Governments of Spain and Bavaria¹

Miguel José Azanza Alegria, Duke de Santa Fe (1746-1826)

Having first followed his uncle to Havana at the age of seventeen, Santa Fe later obtained in 1768 the post of Inspector for New Spain. He subsequently became Secretary to the Captain General of Cuba before being appointed, first, as Secretary for the Spanish embassy at St. Petersburg (1784), and later, as Chargé d'affaires at Berlin. In 1793, Godoy appointed him Spain's Minister of War. After the Aranjuez *coup d'état*, Ferdinand named him Secretary of State for Finances, although he subsequently rallied to Joseph's government, where he served as President of the Junta that approved the Bayonne Constitution. Joseph rewarded Santa Fe by appointing him Minister of the Indies in July 1808. Two years later, he tried unsuccessfully as Spanish ambassador to France to negotiate the repeal of the Ebro Decree. On his return to Madrid, Joseph made him Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, soon after granting him the title of duke of Santa Fe. After the Peninsular War, he published (along with Gonzalo O'Farril) a justification of his support for the Bonapartist Kingdom, and died penniless in France.²

Francisco Cabarrús (1752-1810)

Born in Bayonne to a merchant family that had long worked in Spain, Cabarrús was sent by them as an apprentice to Valencia, Spain. His career was advanced by a marriage to his employer's daughter, leading to his father-in-law putting him in charge of the family's Madrid soap factory. In 1782, the count of Floridablanca, Charles IV's Chief Minister, backed his effort to create the *Banco de San Carlos*. In 1785, he helped organize the Commercial Company of the Philippines. He was also appointed to the Royal Council of Finances, becoming at the same time a prominent member of the Royal Society of the Friends of the Country. His financial speculations led in 1788 to accusations of corruption; four years of imprisonment followed. (His daughter Theresa would later become the famous Madame Tallien of the Paris Salons, mistress to many powerful men.) By 1797, Cabarrús was back in government, serving as Spain's Delegate to the Congress

¹ These biographical essays focus on those government officials of the satellite governments of Bavaria and Spain who interacted most closely with the two ambassadors studied, but whose biographies could not be covered adequately in the main text. For biographical information on the French officials and generals who interacted with the ambassadors, the reader is directed to the appropriate entries in the *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, 2 Vols., Sous la direction de Jean Tulard. (Paris: Fayard, 1999) ; Georges Six. *Dictionnaire biographique des généraux & amiraux Français de la Révolution et de l'Empire (1792-1814)*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Librairie Historique et Nobiliaire, 1934); or Jacques Henri-Robert. *Dictionnaire des diplomates de Napoléon* (Paris: Kronos, 1990).

² Biographical information drawn from Gérard Dufour, "Azanza (Miguel José de)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 151-2.

of Rastadt. The following year, Charles IV appointed him ambassador to Paris, although the Directory would not accept him, arguing that no Frenchman could represent a foreign power. He nevertheless remained in Paris, acting as a secret agent for Madrid. In 1808, he rallied to Joseph, and was appointed Finance Minister, a difficult position considering the dire financial plight of Spain during the Peninsular War. Laforest considered his death a great loss to the Spanish state, even though Cabarrús and the ambassador often clashed about important financial issues.³

Manuel José Antonio de Negrette, Conde de Campo Alange (1736-1818)

His career began as Secretary of State for War to Charles IV. He rallied to Joseph in August 1808, and was named Foreign Minister. In early 1811, he was sent to replace Azanza as ambassador to Paris. Laforest initially considered him “too feeble for most political activities,” but over time, formed a close relationship with the ambassador.⁴

Don Diégo Fernandez de Velasco Lopez Pacheco y Giron, Marquis de Belmonte, Duke de Frias (1754-1811)

Frias’ diplomatic career began when he was appointed ambassador to Portugal. Ambassador to France in 1808, he rallied to Joseph after the *dos de mayo*, and continued to represent Spain at the imperial court, where he died in 1811.

José Martínez de Hervas, Marquis d’Almenara (1760-1830)

His political career began when he was appointed to the Council of Finances by Charles IV. He later became a rich banker in Paris during the French Revolution. Charles subsequently appointed him Chargé d’ affaires at the Paris embassy in 1803, and ambassador to Constantinople in 1805. In February 1811, he was sent to Paris, charged with negotiating a restoration of Spain’s sovereignty vis-à-vis the French military. Appointed Interior Minister upon his return, he later went into exile in France, where he wrote several articles defending his service to Joseph.⁵

Jean Guillaume, Baron de Hompesch-Bollhein (1761-1809)

Born in the Duchy of Juliers to a high official, he later pursued a religious career as Canon of Eichstadt, (and later Spire), before entering the administration of the Duchy of Berg. Joachim Murat, made grand duke in 1805, asked him to stay on. Generally well thought of, in October 1806 he was asked by Max Joseph to take the post his father had once held as Finance Minister for the Kingdom of Bavaria. Otto called him “as enlightened as he is hardworking.” A

³ Biographical information drawn from Gérard Dufour, “Cabarrus (Francisco),” in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, I, 340; and David Ringrose. *Spain, Europe and the “Spanish Miracle”* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 373.

⁴ Biographical information drawn from footnote 1, in Antoine René Charles Mathurin, Comte de Laforest. *Correspondance du Comte de Laforest*, 7 Vols., édité par Geoffroy de Grandmaison. (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1905-1913).I, 189; and Laforest to Champagny. August 11, 1808, in Laforest, I, 206.

⁵ Biographical information drawn from footnote 1, in Laforest, I, 377.

sometimes rival of Montgelas, he also became one of his most important collaborators. Through a series of emergency financial measures, he managed to preserve Bavaria's shaky finances through the early period of the Napoleonic Wars. He subsequently presided over a successful reorganization of the kingdom's finances and administration until his death, perhaps of overwork, at the age of 48.⁶

André François Miot, Comte de Melito (1762-1841)

Born at Versailles, and a member of the Club de Feuillants, he was almost arrested in August 1793. He joined the French Foreign Ministry the following year as Secretary General under Minister François Deforgues. After Deforgues' successor Buchot was removed from office, Miot temporarily served as Commissaire des relations extérieures, which is to say Foreign Minister in all but name. He was later sent as ambassador to Florence, then Rome (1795), Piedmont (1796) and Holland (1799). Appointed Administrator General of the departments of Corsica in 1801, by 1806 he was Joseph's Interior Minister in Naples before following him to Spain, where he served as Intendant-Général of the royal household. One of the most prominent Frenchmen in Joseph's court, Melito often clashed with ambassador Laforest; perhaps because of this, he was named a count in 1814. He retired from public life after losing both his son and son-in-law at Waterloo, although he was inducted in 1835 into the Académie Française for his translations of Herodotus and Diodorus. His colorful memoirs are one of the more important sources of the politics of Joseph's court, although they are biased against those Melito considered the king's enemies, including Laforest.⁷

Gonzalo O'Farril y Herrera (1754-1831)

Born in Havana, of Irish parentage, he went to France at an early age, where he studied at the Collège of Sorèze. He later entered the military academy of Avila, and subsequently became professor of mathematics in military schools in Segovia and Cadiz. He returned to France in 1780 to participate in an aborted project for an invasion of England during the American Revolution. Back in Spain, he served as Lieutenant General during the War of the Convention. Although Charles IV later wanted him to be Foreign Minister, O'Farril, commanding the Spanish division sent to Italy in 1806, refused to leave his soldiers. He did accept the appointment as Secretary of State for War from Ferdinand in 1808. Convinced Spain could not resist France, he continued in that post under Joseph. In exile, he later published (with Azanza) a justification of his participation in the Bonapartist Kingdom. Ferdinand refused his requests to return to Spain, and he died in exile. Laforest considered him, a man with a "good head," "honest," and someone "who knew his business."⁸

⁶ Biographical information drawn from Marcel Dunan. *Napoléon et l'Allemagne: Le Système Continental et les Débuts du Royaume de Bavière, 1806-1810* (Paris: Plon, 1943). 59-60.

⁷ Biographical information drawn from footnote 1, Laforest, II, 127; André François Miot de Melito. *Mémoires*, 3 Vols. (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1858).

⁸ Biographical information drawn from Gérard Dufour, "O'Farril Y Herrera (Gonzalo)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 419-20; and Laforest to Champagny. May 22, 1808, in Laforest, I, 37.

Mariano-Luis de Urquijo (1768-1817)

Born in Bilbao, Spain, Urquijo obtained a law degree from the Universities of Madrid and Salamanca. He narrowly avoided a trial before the Inquisition for translating Voltaire. In 1792, he was appointed First Officer to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. In 1797, he was appointed ambassador to the Batavian Republic. As Minister-Secretary of State to Charles IV after 1798, he introduced reforms as diverse as the abolition of slavery in Spain, vaccinations, and Humboldt's scientific expedition to the Americas. He participated in the 1800 negotiations of the Treaty of Aranjuez with France, but later supported Joseph, serving as Minister-Secretary of State and as Secretary to the Junta of Bayonne. He died in exile.⁹

⁹ Biographical information drawn from Gérard Dufour, "Urquijo (Mariano-Luis de)," in *Dictionnaire Napoléon*, II, 909.

Appendix II: Documents

Document II-A: Imperial Decree Sequestering the Property of Certain Spaniards

Extract of the Minutes of the Secretary of State. [Imperial Camp at Burgos]

November 12, 1808.

“Napoleon, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and Protector of the Rhine.

Considering that the troubles in Spain were principally the effect of plots hatched by several individuals, and that the greatest number of them who took part were led astray or deceived;

Wanting to pardon them and to grant forgiveness for the crimes that they have committed towards us, our nation and the King our brother;

Wanting at the same time to single out those who, after having sworn loyalty to the King, violated their oath; who, after having accepted high office, did not serve with the authority which had been confided to them, instead betraying the interests of their Sovereign; and who, instead of using their influence in order to enlighten the citizens, made use of it to deceive them;

Wanting finally that the punishment of those most guilty serve as an example to posterity, and to all those who, placed by providence at the head of nations instead of leading the people with wisdom and prudence, pervert it, lead it into disorder and precipitate it into the misfortunes of war;

We have decreed and decree as follows:

Art. 1

The dukes of L’Infantado, de Hjar, de Medina-Sidonia, de Osuna, the marquis de Santa Cruz, the counts of Fernan-Nunez et d’Altamira, the prince of Castelfranco, le S. Pierre Cévallos, ex-Minister of State, and the bishop of Santander, are declared enemies of France and Spain, and traitors to the two crowns. As traitors, they will be seized in their person, transferred to a military commission. Their goods, movable and immovable will be confiscated in Spain, in France, in the Kingdom of Italy, in the Kingdom of Naples, in the Papal States, in the Kingdom of Holland, and in all the countries occupied by the French army, in order to pay for the expenses of war.

Art. 2

All sales and dispositions or testamentaries made by them posterior to the date of the present decree are declared null and void.

Art. 3

We grant such in our name, as in the name of our brother the King of Spain, general pardon and complete amnesty to all Spaniards who, in the delay of a month after our entry into Madrid, will have laid down their arms and renounced all alliance, adhesion and communication with England, and have now rallied around the constitution and the throne.

Art. 4

Excepted from this pardon and amnesty are all members of the Central Junta and insurrectionists. The present Decree will be published and enregistered in all the Councils, Courts and Tribunals in order to be executed as law.

Signed: Napoleon

By the Emperor

The Minister Secretary of State Hughes B. Maret”¹⁰

¹⁰ AAE. CP Espagne Vol. 677, fol. 205-6.

Document II-C: Report of Foreign Minister Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Perigord to First Consul Napoleon Bonaparte, April 23, 1800

Paris, 3 Floréal Year VIII of the Republic One and Indivisible (April 23, 1800)

Art. 1. 4 Ranks- Secretary of Legation 1st class. Secretary of Legation 2nd Class. Minister Plenipotentiary. Ambassador. Different regulation for the service of commercial relations.

Art. 2. A class of aspirants will be established, to be placed in the bureaus and legations, progressing by exams, determined by the Minister. A new rank of student will be established as the first rank of promotion for the department.

Art. 3. Promotions will be decided by reports.

Art. 4. There will be a salary for each grade and for the expenses of [each] post.

Art. 5. The First Consul will be able to confer a grade superior to an agent's post or to name an agent to a post superior to his grade. The salary of the agent will then match his new post.

Art. 6. An agent will receive a brevet in grade after four years of service. Before this time he will only occupy an inferior grade, except in cases covered by Art. 5. This will also apply in the future to appointments of the First Consul.

Art. 7. An agent who is recalled will given the pay of his previous post until he will receive a new post.

Art. 8. An agent recalled and asked to account for his conduct must justify himself before a commission of five appointed by the First Consul, which will then make a report for the First Consul. It is only by this report that an agent can be removed from his grade.

Art. 9. The First Consul can by special order and without a commission reduce the grades of recalled agents. The agent then will be given the pay of the grade inferior to the one lost.

Art. 10. Grades of the foreign and internal bureaus will be equivalent. A head of a political bureau will be equivalent to a secretary of legation, second class. Sub-chiefs will be equivalent to a secretary, first class. Heads of political divisions will be equivalent to a Minister plenipotentiary. These promotions will be given after four years of service. The Minister will receive the grade of ambassador only if he has previously been Minister Plenipotentiary, or after two years as Minister.

Art. 11. Agents that are recalled after 1 Germinal, An VIII can receive a brevet when they fulfill the necessary terms- four years service, or two under the revolution.

Art. 12. The grade held will be the basis for one's salary after retirement at half-pay, or full pay, after twenty-five years of service, or an increase in pay proportional to one's talents and services.

Art. 13. Agents who retired before 1789 will no longer have to justify their services for a pension. One-quarter of this payment will be made in advance.

Art. 14. Agents will not be deprived of any grade conferred by the Senate or First Consul.

Art. 15. [Salary] for an ambassador: 10,000 francs. Min. Plen. 6,000. Secretary 1st Class. 2,400. Secretary 2nd Class. 1,000. Student Brevet. 600.

Art. 16. The Minister of Foreign Relations will organize the internal service of his department, in a manner to establish a special regulation for promotion by bureau for the employees. Each employee will receive a title according to his age and services, starting with the rank of student. A table and regulation will be formed [for this purpose.]

Art. 17. A deduction will be set aside for the expenses that must result from the execution of the present regulation.

The Minister of Foreign Relations is charged with the execution of this act.

The First Consul, signed: Bonaparte. By the First Consul,
the Secretary of State, signed: Hughes B. Maret.

By confirmed copy:
The Minister of Foreign Relations, Ch. Mau. Talleyrand.
By the Minister,
The Chief of the Division of Funds and Compatibility, Bresson.
Printed: Prarial An VIII. ¹¹

¹¹ Rapport au Premier Consul de la République, par le Ministre des Relations Extérieures. 3 Floréal An VIII (April 23, 1800) AAE. M+D France Vol. 528, fol. 298-300.

Appendix III: Economic Data

Table III-A: French Exports to the Confederation of the Rhine and to the Kingdoms of Spain and Italy, Revolutionary Year XIV-1817¹²

Year	Total French Imports	Total French Exports	Exports to the German Rhinebund	Exports to Spain	Exports to the Kingdom of Italy
XIV-1806*	532	465	126.132	65.3111	40.059
1807	393/418	376/385	99.465	65.614	40.607
1808	320/401	331/341	131.838	33.202	44.31
1809	288/358	332/341	115.618	33.907	43.84
1810	339/385	365/377	143.391	38.343	51.646
1811	299	328	110.544	40.427	52.563
1812	308	419	111.034	38.183	56.906
1813	251	354	72.514	22.168	47.944
1814	239	346	65.303	61.774	30.622
1815	199	422	81.178	54.337	20.427
1816	242	547	73.037	56.642	18.827
1817	332	464	56.211	50.094	15.103

¹² Table drawn from “Appendix G: Official Values of French Foreign Trade 1787-1824 (million francs, fractions omitted,” and “Appendix I: Principal Destinations of French Exports September 1805 TO 1817 (Official values in millions of Francs),” in Geoffrey Ellis. *Napoleon’s Continental Blockade: The Case of Alsace* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 285-6, 288-9. All figures are in millions of francs. Ellis provides figures from two sources for the years 1807-1810. The figures to the left of the slash come from the ‘Statistique générale’ of 1838, reproduced in Charles Vogel. *Du commerce et des progrès de la puissance commerciale de l’Angleterre et de la France au point de vue de l’histoire, de la législation et de statistique*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Veuve Berger Levrault, 1864-7), Vol. I, 451. The figures to the right come from AN F12 251, reproduced in Kirsten Heils. *Les rapports économiques franco-danois sous le Directoire, le Consulat et l’Empire. Contributions à l’étude du Système continental* (Paris: Presse de la Cité, 1958), 209. *- Trade data covers the period for the Revolutionary Year XIV and 1806.

Table III-B: Value of Imports and Exports (in millions of lira) of the Kingdom of Italy in 1810 and 1812¹

Destination or Source of Imports	1810-Imports	1812-Imports	1810-Exports	1812-Exports
France	63.013	80.294	35.534	66.34
Germany	16.718	16.07	26.487	7.524
Kingdom of Naples	14.718	11.325	4.105	3.237
Illyrian Provinces	9.901	12.03	12.161	15.675
Ionian Isles	5.76	**	4.476	**
Switzerland	9.28	5.91	23.616	15.354
Levant	6.753	6.82	5.646	2.0
Papal States	4.34	*	4.862	*
Holland	4.015	*	2.85	*
Austria	3.267	2.65	24.97	21.625
Russia	1.632	2.75	-	-
Spain	0.87	-	-	-

13 Table drawn from "Valeur (en Lires) des Exportations du Royaume d'Italie en 1810 et en 1812," and "Valeur (en Lires) des Importations du Royaume d'Italie en 1810 et en 1812," in Eugène Tarlé. *Le Blocus Continental et le Royaume d'Italie: La Situation économique de l'Italie sous Napoléon Iers* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1931), 235-6. *- Annexed by the French Empire in 1810. **- Included in the figures for the Illyrian Provinces.

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