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Kings, Clients and Satellites in the Napoleonic Imperium

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ABSTRACT Napoleon shaped his Empire with the expansion of dynastic possessions, the cultivation of princely clientele and the establishment of satellite and allied states. He built his imperium on the foundation of historic French relationships. This expansion began with the Revolutionary Republic and achieved its fullest extent under the Empire. Expansion was not pursued as a universal principle, but instead, each state became a part of a grand strategic objective related to respective enemies. In some cases, states served as buffers between France and their immediate enemies, but shortly thereafter served a dual role as offensive and defensive components of the Republic, and later Napoleonic Empire.

KEY WORDS: Napoleon, Napoleonic Wars, Grand-Strategy, Foreign Policy, Satellite States

The Peace of Câteau-Cambresis in 1559 ended the Habsburg–Valois conflict that began with the French King Charles VIII's invasion of Italy in 1494. Included in the agreement was the restoration of Emmanuel Philibert, 10th Duke of Savoy-Piedmont, to his Piedmontese domain. The French had occupied his duchy since 1538 and the erstwhile ruler spent the next 20 years in the service of Emperor Charles V and later Philip II. The restoration of the House of Savoy to Piedmont established a pro-Spanish Habsburg satellite state on the borders of the French kingdom with the ability to guard the Alpine gates that led to the north Italian plain. Over the next decade, Emanuel Philibert expanded his realm, strengthening it with the acquisition of several cities and fortified towns. The Piedmontese army increased in size, and its close association with the Spanish meant Philip and his successors were able to secure their dynastic hold in Italy. On the grand strategic scale, the restoration of Piedmont closed the Habsburg territorial ring around the kingdom of France. This encirclement was achieved through

dynastic possessions, the cultivation of princely clientele, and the establishment of satellite or allied states.¹

By no means did 1559 introduce the first satellite or client states into the European diplomatic lexicon, but it is an illustration of the historical precedent of establishing and maintaining empires by creating and fostering satellites and client states. Historical examples can be found further back to the Roman Republic. Client and satellite kingdoms during the first and second centuries BC were an integral part of extending and at the same time securing the Roman Republic from its external enemies, be they Carthage, Hellenistic Greece, Mithradatic Anatolia, or Parthia.²

If one leaps forward to the Napoleonic era, one must consider the creation and maintenance of satellite and client states in similar terms. Furthermore, Napoleon's Empire is better understood within the wider period of the French Revolution and still more so, the broader context of French history. His Imperium reflected in many ways continuity in French foreign policy with regard to long-term historical interests. This is clearly the case with the kingdoms of Italy and Naples, Holland, Spain and the Germanies – the Confederation of the Rhine, or *Rheinbund* – and is equally applicable to Napoleon's interest in Poland – the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. The strategic role of these states can only be properly understood within this historical perspective.³

¹Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP 1998), 3, 85–6; Walter Barberis, *Le armi del Principe: La tradizione militare sabauda* (Turin: G. Einaudi 1988), xviii–xix, 5, 14, 24–5; Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper & Row 1976), II, 945–9; David Parrott, 'The Utility of Fortifications in Early Modern Europe: Italian Princes and Their Citadels, 1540–1640', *War in History* 7/2 (April 2000), 141–4. For the continued significance of Piedmont in relation to Spanish power in Italy see Christopher Storrs, 'The Army of Lombardy and the Resilience of Spanish Power in Italy in the Reign of Carlos II (1665–1700) (Part I)', *War in History* 4/4 (Dec. 1997), 371–97; (Part II), *War in History* 5/1 (Jan. 1998), 1–22.

²Graham Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Centuries AD*, 3rd ed. (Norman: Oklahoma UP 1998), 28–38; cf. Fergus Millar, 'Emperors, Frontiers and Foreign Relations, 31 BC to AD 378', *Britannia* 13 (1982), 1–23.

³The placing of the French Revolutionary Wars in their historical context pertaining to the Habsburg Empire was first argued by Tim Blanning and Gunther E. Rothenberg, see T.C.W. Blanning, *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars* (New York: Longman 1986) and his *The French Revolutionary Wars 1787–1802* (New York: Arnold 1996); Gunther E. Rothenberg, 'The Origins, Causes, and Extension of the Wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18/4 (Spring 1988), 771–93. More recently Michael Hochedlinger supported this perspective in *Austria's Wars of Emergence, War, State and Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1683–1797* (Harlow, UK: Longman 2003). Gary Savage advanced this argument

When considering the purpose of the satellites, it is equally critical to place them within the greater framework of the Grand Empire. Their chronological establishment is directly related to their role within the Empire, but more significantly, much of the interest in developing these regions of Europe as first client and then satellite occurred as the French Republic expanded, and later transformed into the Empire. In some cases states were initially envisioned as buffers between France and its immediate enemies, but shortly thereafter they became integral parts of the internal French Empire; providing men, money and materiel thereby serving a dual role as offensive and defensive components of the Republic, and later Napoleonic Empire.

The German territories on the west bank of the Rhine as well as the Austrian Netherlands, Savoy and Nice, first fell under French rule in late 1792–93. Holland followed in 1795, and northern Italy in 1796–97. The War of the First Coalition laid the groundwork for the subsequent integration of Western Europe into the French empire. As the revolutionaries made conscious parallels to the Roman Republic, their territorial expansion reflected the growth of their own ‘empire’ in the midst of a domestic republic. This extension of influence occurred irrespective of any particular political entity directing revolutionary policy. General Charles Dumouriez laid the foundations of French grand strategy in 1792, and although he defected to the Austrians when the monarchy was overthrown, the nature and aim of French grand strategy did not change, but rather, expanded to include even grander territorial objectives. The purpose of extending French influence via satellites and clients, however, was not pursued as a universal principle of expansion; instead, each state became part of a grand strategic objective related to containing France’s enemies and was not unique to the Napoleonic era.

Hence, a system designed to weaken, if not, eliminate Habsburg dynastic power involved northern and central Italy, the Holy Roman Empire and the Austrian Netherlands. A purposeful anti-Prussian agenda resulted in a French presence in northern Germany, Saxony, and Poland; an anti-Russian focus involved south Germany – Swabia precisely – Poland and the Ottoman Empire. War with Britain meant making use of Holland, Naples and Spain. None of these strategic policies originated with Napoleon, but he departed from traditional French grand-strategic policies after his achievement of these three goals in 1807.

viewing it from Paris in ‘Favier’s Heirs: The French Revolution and the Secret du Roi’, *Historical Journal* 41/1(March 1998), 225–58. cf. Introduction in Frederick C. Schneid, *Warfare in Europe, 1792–1815* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate 2007), xi–xxiv.

Italy

Napoleon reorganized Italy with a clear understanding of its strategic significance to France. Piedmont's role in the First Coalition was in part propagated by the Girondin government's desire to achieve a quick victory in the wake of the failures in Belgium in the spring of 1792, and the impending Prussian offensive across the Rhine that summer. Nonetheless, the hostile relationship between France and Piedmont was not inevitable. As much as Piedmont served as a Spanish satellite in the sixteenth century, and a French ally in the seventeenth century, its role as the geographic intermediary between France and Austria became more complicated during the reign of Louis XIV and thereafter. Instead of being pushed and pulled by rival dynastic policies, Duke (later King) Victor Amadeus II (reigned 1675–1730) played one against the other. This was not entirely successful and during the War of Spanish Succession (1701–14) he threw in his lot with the Habsburgs, to prevent the Spanish possessions, Milan and Naples from passing to the Bourbons.⁴

The position of the House of Savoy for the first half of the eighteenth century placed it once more between Habsburg Milan, and Bourbon France. During the War of Polish Succession, in 1733, France, Spain and Piedmont entered into a strategic alliance to eject the Austrians from Milan and transfer the duchy to the House of Savoy.⁵ Despite a successful military campaign, the French and Spanish Bourbons intended to break their agreement with Piedmont and hand the duchy to the Spanish. The failure to honor the alliance again threw the House of Savoy fully into the Habsburg sphere during the War of Austrian Succession. Unfortunately, the Savoyard strategic position vis-à-vis France was undermined by both a Spanish army in Genoa and a very well-led French offensive by Marshal the Marquis de Maillebois, which seriously threatened Turin in 1745.⁶ The War of Austrian Succession illustrated the vulnerability of Piedmont to a joint Franco-Spanish commitment in Italy, yet, for all the forces dedicated to the peninsula during the conflict, the Bourbons failed to eject the Habsburgs from Lombardy or overwhelm Savoy.

⁴See Ralph D. Handen, 'The End of an Era: Louis XIV and Victor Amadeus II', in *Louis XIV and Europe*, edited by Ragnhild Hatton (Columbus: Ohio State UP 1976).

⁵Cristina Borreguero Beltrán, 'The Spanish Army in Italy, 1734', *War in History* 5/4 (Nov. 1998), 405; for a classic account see Spencer Wilkinson, *The Defence of Piedmont, 1742–1748: A Prelude to the Study of Napoleon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1927), 23–4.

⁶Wilkinson, *Defence of Piedmont*, 202–25; Reed Browning, *The War of Austrian Succession* (New York: St Martin's Press 1993), 231–4.

More decisive to Italian politics was the Bourbon–Habsburg alliance of 1754. Its implications in Germany were understood by Frederick II (the Great), but the impact of this new political relationship was a welcome relief to Italian princes. For the first time in 400 years dynastic rivalries over Italy were settled. For the House of Savoy, this situation complicated matters, as their traditional policy of playing Bourbon off Habsburg was no longer possible. Furthermore, Piedmont had developed a significant relationship with Britain during the previous conflict. Even after a general peace settled Italy, Piedmont's position deteriorated when France acquired Corsica in 1768, and the British fleet no longer operated out of the central Mediterranean. Outflanked, and caught between two dynasties, King Charles Emmanuel III succumbed to political realities, and between 1771 and 1775 three marriages between Savoy and Bourbon sealed their dynastic relationship. In 1775, the year after Louis XVI ascended the throne Piedmont entered into a secret strategic alliance with France.⁷

France and Piedmont remained allies through 1792. Habsburg policy during these years were squarely focused upon Josephinian reforms which touched Italy only in terms of Lombardy, but in reference to geopolitical and strategic concerns Emperor Joseph II benefited from peace in Italy to focus upon Habsburg interests in the Holy Roman Empire and the Balkans.⁸ It was only in 1792, when Turin became a refuge for French émigrés, including the king's brothers that irredentist hawks in the French Assembly come to consider Piedmont a potential target for French arms. Victor Amadeus III, seeking to avoid a confrontation with France, removed the émigré presence, forcing them to relocate to Germany. Nevertheless, the outbreak of war between the French Republic and the Habsburg Monarchy in April 1792 completely undermined the general peace in Italy, which had lasted since June 1748.

The French declaration of war on Piedmont in September 1792, was far less about strategic or ideological goals, than it was a panacea in the face of repeated defeats by Austria in Belgium, and the Prussians on the Rhine. French operations were limited to the occupation of the duchy of Savoy and the county of Nice; any grander notions of a formal invasion of Italy were not forthcoming. Although Piedmont broke diplomatic relations with France in May, it had yet to join the First Coalition. The Italian front did not form a fundamental part of French

⁷Virgilio Ilari, Piero Croaciani and Ciro Paoletti, *Bella Italia Militar: Eserciti e Marine nell'Italia pre-napoleonica (1748–1792)* (Rome: Stato maggiore dell'esercito, Ufficio storico 2000), 11–6.

⁸Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, 360–96.

grand strategy in 1793, as the federalist revolt in Lyon, Marseilles and Toulon pulled away what few troops the French Armies of the Alps and Italy possessed. Furthermore, the Austrians benefited too from this inactive theater, and concentrated their efforts along the Rhine and in Belgium. Although no coalition offensive ever manifested in Italy in 1793, the potential threat to southern France was very real, as the Piedmontese had invaded France during the War of Austrian Succession. War with Spain exacerbated that threat, and the French found themselves overstretched, having to guard the Alps, repel a Spanish invasion over the Pyrenees into Roussillon, and contend with a civil war plaguing the major commercial cities in the south. This threat played heavily when Lazare Carnot considered his strategic plans for Italy in 1794–96.⁹

French strategy in Italy looked toward eliminating the Habsburg presence in the peninsula and seeking a route to the ‘soft underbelly’ of the monarchy in the Tyrol and Carinthia. Prior to the Bourbon–Habsburg alliance of 1754, as far back as Cardinal Richelieu, French planners understood the significance of French operations in Italy as a means of both weakening Habsburg power in the peninsula, and/or eliciting a Habsburg reaction, either as a distraction from Flanders and Germany, or as a direct threat to the *Erblände* (the Habsburg hereditary lands). When France possessed sufficient forces to commit to multiple theaters, Italy became an active center of operations. When French military power ebbed, Italy became a bastion against Habsburg–Spanish and later Austrian power.¹⁰

General Napoleon Bonaparte’s campaign in 1796–97 inaugurated a revolution in Italian geopolitics and redefined the strategic role of the peninsula. For the first time in centuries of Franco–Habsburg conflict, a French army swept through northern Italy, and invaded Austria. The results of the spring campaign of 1797 cannot be better illustrated than by Bonaparte’s advance upon Vienna, and the subsequent armistice of Leoben signed 120 miles from the Austrian capital.¹¹ The striking thing

⁹Carnot’s orders to Bonaparte reprinted in full, in, Léonce Krebs and Henri Moris, *La Campagne dans les Alpes pendant la Révolution* (Paris: E. Plon 1891), II, 375–8.

¹⁰David Parrott, *Richelieu’s Army* (Cambridge: CUP 2001), 91–100, 102, 112, 116–8, which addresses the War of Mantuan Succession (1628–31) against Habsburg Spain. Parrott argues that prior to 1635 Richelieu’s strategy in Italy was defensive, but once France possessed an adequate number of soldiers and allies, it pursued offensive operations against Spanish and Imperial armies.

¹¹M. De Clerq, *Recueil des Traités de la France* (Paris: A. Durand et Pedone-Lauriel 1880), I, 319–22; An outstanding and detailed examination of the war of the First Coalition in Italy is Virgilio Ilari, Piero Croaciani and Ciro Paoletti, *La Guerra della Alpi (1792–1796)* (Rome: Stato maggiore dell’esercito, Ufficio storico 2000).

about Bonaparte's campaign of 1796–97 was the ability of the small French army to achieve decisive results against overwhelming numbers on more than one occasion.¹²

The Peace of Campo Formio established Venice as a technical 'buffer' between the French Republic's satellites, the Cispadane and Cisalpine Republics, and the Habsburg monarchy, but this provision was merely a sop, and Emperor Francis II had little choice but accept it. The secret and additional articles provided for the evacuation of French troops from the Venetian Republic, and the subsequent military occupation of the fortresses of the Venetian *terra firma* by Habsburg Imperial troops. The Republic was under Austrian military occupation. The French stripped its territory to the Adige, giving it to the new Cisalpine Republic, while the Austrians controlled the remainder. The short duration of the peace made all of this irrelevant, as the status of Venice would change after 1801, with its full annexation to Austria.¹³ After the war of the Second Coalition, the Peace of Lunéville (1801) provided for the Habsburg annexation of Venetia. This again, did nothing to prevent an invasion of Austria from northern Italy in 1805.

The Venetian Republic became nothing more than a staging area for Habsburg armies after 1797. Its utility in this capacity was seen during the war of the Second Coalition, and again in 1805. Nonetheless, the transformation of Venice from independent republic to province, and indeed the annexation of Piedmont and Genoa by France in 1802 and the expansion of the Italian Republic, can be seen in similar terms to the partition of Poland. The geographic redistributions beginning in 1796 ultimately removed all buffers between the French Republic and the Habsburg Monarchy. For all practical purposes, this removed any impediments for one side to march against the other without violating

¹²According to the *'etat'* of 5 March 1796, one month before the campaign, Bonaparte's army numbered 108,677. Yet 'present under arms' was 62,187. The figure is still deceiving, as 22,625 men were allocated either to garrison duty or to the 'coastal divisions' along the Mediterranean. The Army of Italy could have mustered no more than 39,562 men available. By the time Napoleon arrived to take command at the end of March the army's numbers increase a bit to 40,575. Gabriel Fabry, *Campagne de l'Armée d'Italie 1796–1797* (Paris: R. Chapelot 1901), 644–6, 649–51. Krebs and Moris place the strength of *'Italie'* at 47,000 by 9 April. Even if the larger figure is accepted roughly 12,000 troops were en route to the front, or completing their amalgamations; although they would all arrive after the first week of fighting. Krebs and Moris, *Campagne dans les Alpes*, II, 371–4.

¹³De Clerq, *Recueil des Traités*, I, 335–44; cf. Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, 436–8.

neutralities or creating diplomatic crises, and potentially introduce other powers into the conflict.¹⁴

The political transformation of northern and central Italy between 1801 and 1805, established a French presence at the expense of the Habsburgs. Modena and Lombardy were absorbed into the newly reconstituted Italian Republic, while Tuscany became a French dependency under the Spanish Bourbons. The dynastic association of France and Spain, beginning in 1700, remained coherent until March 1793, when radical revolutionary policy led to a French declaration of war. By July 1795, however, Spain made peace. Manuel de Godoy, King Charles IV's chief minister, accepted a French alliance against Britain the following year. This relationship, inaugurated by the Treaty of San Ildefonso (19 August 1796), became the centerpiece of Napoleonic strategy against Britain through 1805. A subsidiary benefit of this alliance was the dynastic relationship with the Italian Bourbon monarchs in Naples and Parma. Furthermore, Spain's ardent Catholicism placed it well in 1796 and later 1801 as an intermediary between Napoleon and the Papacy.¹⁵ The relationship with Spain combined with French military conquests recognized at Campo Formio and later Lunéville, finally achieved the eighteenth century strategic goal of excluding the Habsburgs from the Italian peninsula. Indeed, the totality of revolutionary conquest allowed Napoleon to alter substantially the geographic boundaries of Italy.

The annexation of Piedmont and Genoa and the creation of the Italian Republic, (later the Kingdom of Italy), represented a paradigm shift in Italian geopolitics. Napoleon integrated the former kingdom into the French Republic; its administration and armed forces became French. The demolition of the forts guarding the Alpine passes removed all effective barriers between southern France and the Ticino River, now marking the furthest extent of the French Republic.¹⁶ Indeed, the French projected their power to the Adige River, which represented the border between the Italian Republic and Austrian-occupied Venice.

The Italian Republic, constituted in January 1802, was the conglomeration of the Cisalpine and Cispadane Republics. The two fledging states were overrun with such speed during the war of the

¹⁴Karl Roeder, *Baron Thugut and Austria's Response to the French Revolution* (Princeton UP 1987), 330; Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence*, 428–30, 444–5.

¹⁵De Clerq, *Recueil des Traités*, I, 245–9; Frederick C. Schneid, *Napoleon's Conquest of Europe, The War of the Third Coalition* (Westport, CT: Praeger 2005), 16.

¹⁶Virgilio Ilari, Piero Croaciani, Ciro Paolletti, *Storia Militare dell'Italia Giacobina: dall'armistizio di Cherasco alla pace di Amiens, (1796–1802)* (Rome: Stato maggiore dell'esercito, Ufficio storico 2001) I, 141–64.

Second Coalition, that a larger, self-sustaining entity was needed if it were to provide the necessary buffer between future Habsburg offensives, or conversely to serve as a staging area for French operations against Austria. When the republic became the Kingdom of Italy in March 1805, and Napoleon its king, few questioned the implication of such an event to the French Emperor's ambitions.¹⁷ All of this caused great discomfort in Vienna. Vice-Chancellor Ludwig von Cobenzl, Thugut's successor, wrote the Austrian ambassador in Berlin that the loss of the Austrian Netherlands and Lombardy was as great a blow to the monarchy as the loss of Silesia; and that while the empire received compensation for their loss, they were 'not the equal in population nor revenue.'¹⁸ He later wrote in July 1805 to Cabinet Minister Count Franz von Colloredo in the midst of the Austro-Russian military discussions:

Genoa and Piedmont are in the hands of France, there must be greater security for Italy, more security for the Venetian states... as well we cannot delude ourselves that we will always have 180,000 Russians and the bank of England, our situation will not improve.¹⁹

In short, coalitions provided the means to reassert Habsburg power in northern Italy, but any settlement subsequent to a military victory, had to consider the territorial interests of the Habsburg monarchy. A *status quo ante* was desired at the very least and manifest in the Austro-Russian convention in November 1804.²⁰

Austria's utter failure of the War of the Third Coalition led to the tightening of Napoleon's reigns in Italy. The Kingdom of Italy received Venetia and the Romagna, while Naples was overrun in February 1806. The Dalmatian coast, part of the Venetian Republic became a French dependency, directed from Milan. After 1806, the peninsula fed French armies through direct conscription from Piedmont and Liguria, and the satellite army of the Kingdom of Italy. Approximately 200,000 men were conscripted for the imperial cause between 1805 and 1813 in the

¹⁷Napoleon had been the President of the Italian Republic too, but President and King were considered two entirely different things.

¹⁸*Denkschrift der Staatskanzlei über eine Annäherung an Preußen*, 1 Sept. 1804, Auguste Fourier, *Genz und Cobenzl: Geschichte der österreichischen Diplomatie in den Jahren 1801–1805* (Vienna: W. Braumüller 1880), 293–4.

¹⁹Cobenzl to Colloredo, 20 July 1805, *ibid.*, 174, fn.2.

²⁰F. Martens, *Recueil des Traités et Conventions conclus par la Russie avec les puissances étrangères* (St Petersburg: Imprimerie du Ministère de Voies de Communication 1875), II, 405–21.

Kingdom of Italy; the Piedmontese departments of France provided 72,000 men during the same period.²¹

Dalmatia, the Balkans and the Illyrian Provinces

Italy further proved strategically important for the projection of French power into the Balkans. Expansion into southern Europe provided an opportunity for Napoleon to limit ‘the descent of the Russian glacier toward the Danube and the Mediterranean,’ to establish complete control over the Adriatic, to maintain pressure on Austria and to forge an Ottoman alliance.²² Napoleon wanted a tangible military presence in the Balkans. These acquisitions changed the strategic equation in southern Europe as the Emperor of the French now controlled the Mediterranean coast from Spain to Greece.²³ To extend his influence further east required a rapprochement with the Ottoman Empire.²⁴

In September 1802, First Consul Napoleon dispatched General Guillaume Brune to Constantinople, seeking to dislodge British and Russian influence and subsequently gain recognition of Napoleon as Emperor of the French. Both objectives were not met, and in 1804 the by now Marshal Brune was recalled.²⁵ Yet, Napoleon was in a much-improved position in December 1805 than he was 12 months earlier. The arrival of French troops in January 1806, along the eastern shore of

²¹Ilari, *Storia Giacobina*, I, 152; Frederick C. Schneid, *Soldiers of Napoleon's Kingdom of Italy: Army, State and Society, 1800–1815* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press 1995), 14; Virgilio Ilari, Piero Croaciani and Ciro Paoletti, *Storia Militare del Regno Italico (1802–1814)* (Rome: Stato maggiore dell'esercito, Ufficio storico 2004), I, 49–55.

²²Edouard Driault, *La politique orientale de Napoleon I: Sebastiani et Gardanne, 1806–1808* (Paris: F. Alcan 1904), 6, 151–2; Abbé Paul Pisani, *Le Dalmatie de 1797 à 1815: Episode des conquêtes napoléoniennes* (Paris: A. Picard 1893), 146; Gordon Griffiths, ‘Napoleon's Adriatic Policy’ (PhD Dissertation: Univ. of California 1942), 49–51.

²³Paul F. Shupp, *The European Powers and the Near Eastern Question, 1806–1807* (New York: AMS Press 1966), 66.

²⁴Piers Macksey. *The War in the Mediterranean, 1803–1810* (Westport, CT: Greenwood 1981, orig. 1957), 6. Macksey looks at Britain's strategic advantage by controlling the Mediterranean, but admits difficulties due to French control of the coastline. Yet, the reverse may be said from the French perspective. The British were kept on the peripheries of Europe, unable to gain access to the continent despite their naval presence in the Mediterranean.

²⁵P. Coquelle, ‘L'Ambassade du maréchal Brune à Constantinople’, *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 8 (1904), 72–3.

the Adriatic in Dalmatia changed the balance of power in the Balkans.²⁶ While the British maintained a powerful presence in the central Mediterranean at Malta and Sicily, the Russians controlled the strategic access to the Adriatic at Corfu and had a growing influence over the Balkan Slavs.²⁷ The French occupation of Dalmatia threatened the Russian position in the Adriatic, and Napoleon was eager to undermine Saint Petersburg's influence in the Balkans.²⁸

General (later Marshal) Auguste Marmont's II Corps of the *Grande Armée* arrived in December 1805 and occupied southwestern Austria. In July 1806, Marmont assumed command of Dalmatia, and subsequently directed French operations in the Balkans.²⁹ The value of holding the Adriatic littoral became clear during the war against Austria in 1809, when Marmont used his good relations with the Pasha of Bosnia to encourage raids across the border to distract Habsburg operations in Dalmatia.³⁰ Indeed, the possession of this strip of territory was a valuable counterweight to the Russian presence in the region.

Russia's power in the Adriatic was very much a reality. Since 1805, she maintained a squadron at Corfu, which was supported by more than 15,000 troops.³¹ In response to French occupation of Dalmatia, Russians seized the city of Cattaro (Kotor) and its environs, which were

²⁶Pisani, *La Dalmatie*, 147. The French occupation was established by a division under General Gabriel Molitor that was detached from the *Armée d'Italie*; Griffiths, *Adriatic Policy*, 30.

²⁷This is particularly the case with the Serbs who were in revolt against the Ottoman Turks beginning in 1804. The Serbs initially looked to Vienna, but the Austrians refused to provide support. Subsequently, a Serbian delegation to St Petersburg found firmer ground. Russian support and influence increased through 1806 and thereafter. Gunther E. Rothenberg, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia 1741–1881* (Univ. of Chicago Press 1966), 103–5; Barbara Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements, 1806–1914* (Cambridge: CUP 1991), 11–8.

²⁸Griffiths, *Adriatic Policy*, 51.

²⁹Paris, France, *Archives de la guerre, Service historique de l'armée du terre* [AGSHAT], X^p 22, Napoleon to Marmont, Dec. 1805; Napoleon to Prince Eugène, 21 Feb. 1806, Napoleon, *Correspondance du Napoleon I* (Paris: Plon, 1858–1862), XII, no. 9864, 83, and Napoleon to Eugène, 7 July 1806, no. 10461, 519; Napoleon to Marmont, 7 July 1806, no. 10462, 519–20.

³⁰Rothenberg, *Military Border in Croatia*, 108.

³¹Pisani, *La Dalmatie*, 159. The squadron was under Vice-Admiral Dmitri N. Senyavin. Pisani estimates roughly 20,000 Russians at Corfu and on the Ionian Islands. Most of these were originally earmarked for the abortive invasion of Naples which was attempted in Jan. 1806. See William Flayhart, *Counterpoint to Trafalgar, The Anglo-Russian Invasion of Naples* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press 1992), 145–72; and Macksey, *War in the Mediterranean*, 77–89.

part of Dalmatia and could offer the French a foothold in Montenegro and northern Albania. The Russians then actively stirred up the local populace against the French.³² More significant than Russian military agents operating in the Balkans was Russia's covert involvement with the Serbian revolt, which, by 1806, was already two years old. The Serbs looked to Russia for military aid and common cause against the Ottomans. These activities not only threatened France's position in the Balkans, but also inadvertently served to alienate the Austrians who had a Serbian minority of their own.³³ The Russian's association with the Serbs and their agitation of the Slavic population in the Balkans was a growing concern in Vienna when Russia and Prussia went to war with Napoleon in 1806. The Austrians feared that a successful Slavic national movement supported by the Russians would spill over to their multinational empire.³⁴

Napoleon was aware of the multiplicity of factors related to his ambitions in the Balkans. He determined to pull the Turks away from Russian and British influence and at the same time, send representatives to the local pashas in Bosnia, Trebinje, Janina and Scutari. By 1807, French consuls were in Berat, Jassy, Bucharest, and Salonika.³⁵ Bosnia was of particular strategic importance because it bordered both Austria and Dalmatia. Good relations would secure the Dalmatian border with the Turks. The Bosnian post also gave French agents a direct route into the Balkans, and a line of communications with Dalmatia.³⁶

Janina was of critical importance to Napoleon's designs on Corfu. The Ionian Isles' strategic location at the mouth of the Adriatic and their proximity to the Pashalik of Janina, made Ali Pasha a major focus

³²As early as 1804 the Russians sent a General Ivelich to Montenegro seeking an alliance with King-Bishop Petar I. Macksey, *War in the Mediterranean*, 47n.

³³Rothenberg, *Military Border in Croatia*, 105, Rothenberg relates Archduke Ludwig's (commander of the Military Border) order to Austrian commander on the Serbian border to pay attention to the activities of Russian agents in Belgrade.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 107. For reasons for Austrian aloofness to Russian overtures, see Paul Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1994), 301.

³⁵Napoleon to Lauriston, 20 June 1806, Napoleon. *Correspondance*, XII, no. 10387, 582; Auguste Marmont, *Mémoires du Maréchal Marmont, Duc de Raguse de 1792 à 1841* (Paris: Perrotin, 1857), III, 6–7. Francesco Giannetto, 'La Diplomazia del Regno d'Italia Napoleonica nei suo Rapporti con l'Impero ottomano', *Clio: trimestrale di studi storici* 17 (1981) p. 387; Driault, *Politique orientale*, 58.

³⁶Marmont, *Mémoires*, 6–7.

of French diplomatic and military endeavors.³⁷ Ali Pasha's ambitions involved the expansion of his power throughout Albania at the expense of the neighboring pashas; but his ultimate goal was the capture of Corfu. He believed holding this jewel would make him independent because the island's strategic location would force the Russians, British and French to recognize his importance in the region and vie for his friendship.³⁸ To counterbalance Ali, Napoleon established a representative at the court of the Pasha of Scutari. By playing the pashas off one another, the Emperor succeeded in saturating Albania and Bosnia with French consuls and military advisors.³⁹

Napoleon appointed General Horace Sébastiani ambassador to Constantinople in June 1806, with the purpose of further agitating the Turks against Russia.⁴⁰ The Russians and British were dismayed by the recognition of a French ambassador, coupled with the presence of a French army in Dalmatia, and advisors in the Balkans. Relations between Russia and the Turks deteriorated through 1806, and the rupture was complete with a Turkish declaration of war against Russia in December.⁴¹

War between Russia and the Turks was a great asset to Napoleon, as he had conquered Prussia and was moving against the Russians in Poland. It was of the utmost importance that Ottoman activities be reported regularly to Napoleon. To this end French representatives were posted to at Vidin, in Wallachia, becoming the center of communications between Dalmatia, Constantinople, and Warsaw.⁴²

Napoleon's Balkan policy was realized, although the cost was the eventual collapse of Sultan Selim III's regime. Internal religious opposition to the French stemming from military reforms which undermined the Janissary Corps, led to Selim's dethronement on 29 May 1807 and eventual execution; in his place the Turks chose a Sultan less inclined to treat with the Europeans. Napoleon, for that matter,

³⁷Francesco Giannetto, 'Il Regno d'Italia Napoleonica e il pascialato di Giannina', *Clio: trimestrale di studi storici* 19 (1983), 189–90.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 190–1.

³⁹Giannetto, 'il pascialato di Giannina', 192; Giannetto, 'Diplomazia con ottomano', 387–8.

⁴⁰Napoleon to Talleyrand [forwarded to Sébastiani], 9 June 1806, Napoleon, *Correspondance*, XII, 550–1, no. 10339; Driault, *Politique orientale*, 55.

⁴¹Sébastien to Talleyrand, 24 Dec. 1806, in Edouard Driault, 'Correspondance du général Sébastiani, Ambassadeur a Constantinople: (du 24 Dec. 1806 à 10 Mars 1807)', *Revue des études napoleoniennes* 4 (1913), 402.

⁴²Napoleon to Talleyrand, 20 Jan. 1807, Napoleon, *Correspondance*, XIV, no. 11669, 273; Alfred Dumaine, 'Un Consulate de France en Bosnie sous le premier Empire', *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 38 (1938), 161; Driault, *Politique orientale*, 165.

abandoned the Turkish alliance and the pashas shortly after Selim's deposition, when he signed the Treaty of Tilsit with Tsar Alexander I of Russia in July 1807.

Napoleon continued, however, to strengthen his position in the Adriatic, and toward the Balkans, by the expansion of Dalmatia and the annexation of the Illyrian provinces in 1809, which was a conglomerate of Venetian Dalmatia, and parts of the former Habsburg Military Border in Croatia. Napoleon incorrectly believed the populations of the Military Border despised Habsburg rule, and that the French would be welcomed. This was far from the truth, as the Croats and Serbians desired relief from their military obligations, not a change in management. The *Grenzer*, therefore, returned to Habsburg service with the fall of Illyria in 1813.⁴³

The Holy Roman Empire and *Rheinbund*

Consistently challenged in Italy, the Habsburgs' position in Germany remained firm, excluding a brief period in the eighteenth century. The French contested Austria's hold over Germany from the sixteenth century. Francis I, later Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin, Louis XIV and Louis XV, pursued aggressive but unsuccessful policies to reduce Habsburg influence, if not exclude them altogether from leadership in Germany.⁴⁴ Habsburg forces prior to 1740 largely comprised the *Reichsarmee* (Imperial army of the Holy Roman Empire). Austrian forces formed merely a contingent within the whole. After 1740, the Habsburgs established a significantly enlarged standing Austrian army to defend dynastic territory. The *Reichsarmee* supplemented Austrian forces after 1745, once the Habsburgs regained the imperial throne. The strategic implications here are critical to understanding the significance of Swabia as a frontier between France and Austria. Habsburg and Imperial forces deployed along the Rhine, in Baden and the Habsburg Breisgau for more than a century. During the 1793 campaign, the imperial army did the same.

⁴³Rothenberg, *Military Border in Croatia*, 110–1. *Grenzer* is the term for soldiers of the military border.

⁴⁴On French policy in Germany during the age of Louis XIV see, Georges Livet, 'Louis XIV and the Germanies', and Janine Fayard, 'Attempts to Build a 'Third Party' in North Germany, 1690–1694', in *Louis XIV and Europe* edited by Ragnhild Hatton (Columbus: Ohio State UP 1976); and A. Chéruef, 'La Ligue ou alliance du Rhin', *Séances et travaux de l'Académie des sciences morales* (Paris: Picard 1885). The German princes' perspectives on French are found in Peter H. Wilson, *German Armies, War and German Politics, 1648–1806* (London: UCL Press 1998), Chapter 5, 'Princely Leagues and Associations'.

Even a French alliance with Bavaria did not guarantee the security of the Rhine frontier. Imperial armies could still deploy in Swabia, as they did during the War of Spanish Succession despite the presence of Franco-Bavarian armies operating in Bavaria in 1704.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the Habsburgs could move their own forces from the Vorarlberg along Lake Constance, through Swabian territories, reaching the Rhine without setting foot on Bavarian soil. French Revolutionary strategy therefore, did not depart from this traditional policy, and the government in Paris, particularly after 1794, pursued agreements with the German princes at the expense of Austrian influence. Substantial territorial redistributions in 1803 significantly altered the nature of the Holy Roman Empire, and while it was still a functioning entity, Austria continued to lose ground.⁴⁶

As Napoleon assumed the iron crown of Lombardy in May 1804, uniting France and the Kingdom of Italy, so too should historians view the creation of the *Rheinbund* in July 1806 as the direct projection of French power into central Europe. The *Rheinbund* should be viewed not simply as an administrative entity for a 'new Germany,' but in the grander Napoleonic perspective, as an enormous Napoleonic satellite. French influence in the Holy Roman Empire prior to 1806, had been limited to temporary alliances with German princes. Even the 1648 Peace of Westphalia gave France explicit and narrow rights to intervene in German affairs as a *foreign* power. France became an integral part of the new Germany with the creation of the *Rheinbund*, and the German princes accepted their relationship with France, including their military obligations.⁴⁷

⁴⁵The Blenheim campaign is a perfect illustration with Prince Eugene of Savoy's Imperial army contending with the French along the upper Rhine at the same time as Marshal Tallard's French army, and Max Emmanuel III's Bavarian army faced The Duke of Marlborough in Bavaria.

⁴⁶Sydney Biro, *The German Policy of Revolutionary France: A Study in French Diplomacy during the Wars of the First Coalition* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1957), II, 959–60; Paul Sauer, *Adler über Württemberg, Baden und Hohenzollern: Südwestdeutschland in der Rheinbundzeit* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 1987), 26, 42; Peter H. Wilson, *From Reich to Revolution, German History 1558–1806* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2004), 340–2. The most recent work on this is, Peter H. Wilson, 'Bolstering the Prestige of the Habsburgs: The End of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806', *International History Review* 28/4 (Dec. 2006), 709–36.

⁴⁷De Clerq, *Receuil des Traités*, II, 171–80; see particularly Articles 35–8 concerning military obligations, 178–9. According to the *Rheinbund* treaty, Bavaria was required to field 30,000 men, Westphalia, 25,000 and Saxony 20,000. These figures do not represent the total number of troops within the respective armies. Bavaria possessed 47,000 men, and Westphalia 38,000 by 1812.

Prior to 1806, the German policy of Revolutionary France placed a premium on a strategic relationship with Bavaria, and by extension Baden and Württemberg. The Bavarian electors consistently allied with France from the War of Spanish Succession through the War of Austrian Succession. A French alliance in 1740 gained the Wittelsbachs the coveted Imperial throne in 1742.⁴⁸ Even Duke Carl Eugen of Württemberg was inclined to the French sphere during the Seven Years War.⁴⁹ His successors after 1793 did not reject a potential French alliance, but during the Revolution, Austria and Prussia bullied the princes into declaring a *Reichkrieg* and dividing their respective forces between their two armies. Bavaria, Baden and Württemberg had little desire to participate in the First Coalition, as with most Franco-Habsburg contests in Germany, the war was waged on German soil. Nonetheless, the Revolutionary government pursued relations with these princes, hoping to wean them from their reluctant Habsburg orbit. Although this failed during the First Coalition, the more moderate Directoral government in Paris made significant diplomatic progress, but the Archduke Charles, commanding Imperial forces in Germany quickly disarmed the Swabian and Bavarian contingents, after their princes signed agreements with France.⁵⁰

Bavaria, Baden and Württemberg, were essential client states, providing men and further security to France proper. Their role as buffers between the Habsburg territories and the French frontier were central to revolutionary and early Napoleonic diplomacy, yet after 1805, their roles remained the same, but the scope and extent of the French Empire necessitated German clientele of greater size, population and wealth. As the former frontiers moved east, and the Tyrol and Vorarlberg were annexed by Bavaria, the imperial borderlands changed. Although Bavaria remained a strategic pillar of Napoleon's German policy, Baden and Württemberg were well within the Imperium.

Bavaria, Saxony and Westphalia formed the anchor states within the *Rheinbund* after 1806. The conquest of Prussia and the consolidation of the Empire in northern Germany created a need for buffer states in central and northern Germany. Certainly, Hanover had been in French hands from 1803–06, transferred temporarily to Prussia until the war of 1806, returned to French control during the campaign. They possessed the largest populations of the *Mittelstadt*, provided the greatest number

⁴⁸The Wittelsbach line died out in 1777 and passed to the Pfalz line (Palatinate).

⁴⁹Peter H. Wilson, *War, State and Society in Württemberg, 1677–1793* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1995), 206.

⁵⁰Sauer, *Adler über Württemberg, Baden und Hohenzollern*, 26.

of soldiers to the Imperial armies, and were enlarged after 1806/07 to isolate Prussia and act as buffers against Austria. Bavaria and Saxony were client states, while Westphalia was a Napoleonic satellite, but each was a critical piece in the Imperial puzzle.

The relationship between France and Bavaria was particularly important. Diplomatic and military agreements forged in the age of Louis XIV, remained cogent through the eighteenth century. The extent of the relationship could be measured in 1740, with the election of Karl Albrecht, Elector of Bavaria, as the Holy Roman Emperor to the exclusion of the Habsburg candidate. The cornerstone of this association was the geographic position of Bavaria vis-à-vis Austria. This relationship cooled with the Bourbon–Habsburg condominium of 1754 and the Bavarians were reduced to lesser importance in favor of the more significant strategic association.

After the Seven Years War (1756–63), the Bourbon–Habsburg alliance remained sound, and did not crack for another 20 years. When Joseph II sought international agreements to exchange the Austrian Netherlands for Bavaria with the accession of Karl Theodor the new Elector of the Palatinate, Frederick II (the Great) opposed this alteration of the Imperial constitution inaugurating the War of Bavarian Succession (1778–79). Although the French opposed this territorial exchange, they remained outside the conflict, and instead encouraged reconciliation.⁵¹ Franco-Bavarian relations were obscure until the Peace of Lunéville on 9 February 1801. Diplomatic co-operation improved steadily through 1803, when the electorate received substantial territory though French backing at the Imperial Recess (*Reichsdeputations-Hauptschluss*), but it was not until 1805 that the two states entered into a formal political and military alliance.⁵² Bavaria's role returned to that of buffer or bulwark against Habsburg Austria. Territorially aggrandized at the Imperial Recess of 1803, and with the Treaty of Pressburg in 1805, the electorate, now kingdom, became the premier German state in the *Rheinbund*, and an anchor of Napoleon's Empire in central Europe.

When war broke out in April 1809, Bavaria found itself the first line of defense against a concerted Habsburg offensive. The Bavarian Army played a critical role, forming initially 35 percent of French–Imperial

⁵¹Schroeder, *Transformation of European Politics*, 32; Jeremy Black, *From Louis XIV to Napoleon: The Fate of a Great Power* (London: UCL Press 1999), 129–31.

⁵²The Treaty of Bogenhausen, signed 24 Aug. 1805; De Clerq, *Recueil des Traités*, II, 120–3; Marcus Junkelman, *Napoleon und Bayern: von den Anfängen des Königreiches* (Regensburg: F. Pustet 1985), 91.

forces in south Germany.⁵³ After 1809, the Habsburg–Bonaparte alliance, sealed by the marriage of the Habsburg Princess Marie-Louise to Napoleon, did not alter Bavaria’s strategic significance as the earlier Habsburg–Bourbon alliance had done. Bavaria remained a critical part of the Empire but it was no longer the bastion on the frontier. Austria took over that role after 1809, as Napoleon gradually eyed Russia.

Saxony and Hesse-Cassel (the core of Westphalia), had little historic or strategic relationship with France. Both, however, were appendages of Prussian military power during and after the reign of Frederick the Great. The landgraves of Hesse-Cassel were well paid for the use of their armies in the eighteenth century. Britain was perhaps their best client, yet, particularly after mid-century Prussia integrated the German territory into its military sphere, as with much of north Germany after 1795. The elevation of Wilhelm I (IX) to electoral status in the Holy Roman Empire with Napoleon’s support in 1803 did little to wean the territory from Prussia. During the initial stage of the 1805 campaign in Germany, Wilhelm I permitted Marshal Jean Bernadotte’s I Corps transit through his electorate, but his association with Prussia remained firm. Despite Napoleon’s warning to the contrary, the Hessian Army joined the Prussians in October 1805. Indeed, Wilhelm I commanded a Prusso-Hessian corps during the last precarious months of 1805.⁵⁴ The following year, war with Prussia found the Hessian elector again in close alliance with Prussia. Napoleon therefore determined to eliminate the electorate, with an invasion by Marshal Edouard Mortier’s corps in October 1806.

The Kingdom of Westphalia, established at Tilsit, the following year largely comprised Brunswick, Hessian and Prussian territories. Geographically, Westphalia was to Prussia, what Bavaria was to Austria, an extension of the French Empire on its formal frontier. More than this, however, it reinforced the French administration in north Germany, the rump of Hanover and the Hanseatic cities.⁵⁵ It also

⁵³The Bavarians fielded 40,000 by the end of March 1809, with French strength at approximately 60,000, and an additional 10,000 from Baden and Württemberg. By mid-April, Napoleon arrived with reinforcements; the Bavarians comprised 25 percent of Imperial forces in south Germany. See John H. Gill, *With Eagles to Glory: Napoleon and His German Allies in the 1809 Campaign* (London: Greenhill Press 1992), 68–100; cf. Max Leyh, *Die Feldzüge des Bayerischen Heeres unter Max I. (IV) Joseph von 1805 bis 1815* (Munich: Schick 1935), 126–41.

⁵⁴Schneid, *Napoleon’s Conquest of Europe*, 135; Grosse Generalstab, ‘Die Preußischen Kriegsvorbereitungen und Operationspläne von 1805’, in *Kriegsgeschichte Einzelschriften* (Berlin: Abteilung für Kriegsgeschichte 1898), I, 33–7.

⁵⁵After Jan. 1810, when Napoleon annexed north Germany, he gave command of the entire region, including the Kingdom of Westphalia to Marshal Louis Davout. The

provided a continuous front from Bavaria to north Germany. After Bavaria, the kingdom possessed the second largest army in the *Rheinbund*, at 25,000 men, reaching 38,000 by 1812. Westphalia also provided Napoleon with a ready-made satellite army. Unlike Italy, the creation of this new kingdom came with Hessian regiments, some of the finest in Europe.⁵⁶

Saxony possessed the third largest army in the *Rheinbund*, and was an equally important ally in the imperium. Its military commitment included 20,000 men, but in 1809, 25,000 mobilized for war.⁵⁷ Saxony had become victim of Prussian aggression in 1756, when Frederick the Great struck preemptively, occupying the electorate to deny Austria an ally north of the Bohemian mountains. Thereafter, Saxony found itself an unwilling Prussian ally, particularly during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The German electorate preferred a close association with the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperors and the rise of Frederickian Prussia made this relationship critical. The dramatic defeat of Austria in 1805 removed that option. In 1805, and again 1806, Prussia forced Saxony to commit its army against France.⁵⁸ Although no Saxon troops saw combat in 1805, they were decimated along with their Prussian counterparts at Jena in 1806.

After Prussia's abject defeat, Napoleon actively and successfully pursued a Saxon alliance by elevating Frederick Augustus III, Elector of Saxony, to the royal dignity. This placed him on the same footing as Bavaria and Württemberg, two key French allies.⁵⁹ Saxony thereafter remained a thorn in Prussia's side through 1813. It is no surprise then, that Napoleon used Saxony's central position in Germany to stage offensive operations that year into Prussia, as it afforded him a short and direct route to Berlin, while allowing him to guard the Bohemian

marshal was charged with the enforcement of the Continental System in north Germany. Pierre Charrier, *Le Maréchal Davout* (Millau: Fondation Napoléon 2005), 434–5.

⁵⁶Gill, *With Eagles to Glory*, 414–5; The most recent scholarship on Westphalia and its army is, Michael Pavkovic, "'The Palladium of Westphalian Freedom' Recruitment and Conscription in the Kingdom of Westphalia', in *Napoleonic Conscription: A Revolution in Military Affairs*, (eds.) Donald Stoker, Hal Blanton and Frederick Schneid (London: Routledge 2008).

⁵⁷Moritz Exner, *Die Antheilnahme der Königlich Sächsischen Armee am Feldzuge gegen Oesterreich und die kriegerischen Ereignisse in Sachsen im Jahre 1809* (Dresden: Baensch 1894), 21.

⁵⁸André Bonnefons, *Un allié de Napoleon, Frédéric-Auguste Premier roi de Saxe et Grand-Duc de Varsovie, 1763–1827* (Paris: Perrin 1902), 128–35; Wilson, *German Armies*, 310.

⁵⁹Bonnefons, *Un allié de Napoleon*, 128–35, 181, 194.

passes.⁶⁰ Many of the major battles in 1813, including Lützen, Bautzen, Dresden and Leipzig, were fought in Saxony.

The Kingdoms of Saxony and Westphalia were strategically vital to the maintenance and extension of Napoleon's empire in Germany. Although they became buffer states in 1813, their respective locations and their contributions to the Imperial armies were a clear and present danger to Prussia. Napoleon's restrictions of Prussia's Army to 42,000 men, and the establishment of adjacent satellite and client states that contributed 45,000 men, placed Prussia in a particularly dangerous position. When one also considers that Frederick Augustus I, King of Saxony, also held the title of Grand Duke of Warsaw, and possessed a Polish army too, Saxony's place within the imperium is all the more significant.⁶¹

Poland

France and Russia rarely saw eye to eye in matters of central Europe. They disputed the succession of the Polish throne in 1733, and the first partition in 1772, but came to terms over common threats such as Prussia (1757) and Austria (1778–79).⁶² Russia's growing influence in Europe became evident in the late eighteenth century. Although its ability to project its power into central Europe during the Seven Years War was wrought with logistical difficulties, the partitions of Poland gave the Russians a position of forward deployment; hence, the ability of Tsar Paul I to put an army into Italy in 1799, and Alexander I to move three armies into central Europe from Poland in 1805. Familial relations with the Swabian princes and the Treaty of Teschen in 1779 gave the Russians the right to intervene in German affairs. All of this enabled Tsars Paul and Alexander to extend their influence into Italy and Germany.

⁶⁰Michael Leggiere, *Napoleon and Berlin* (Norman: Oklahoma UP 2002), 47–54 and *passim*.

⁶¹Although the Grand Duchy was under the nominal control of Frederick Augustus I and Napoleon maintained the appearance of his independence on the Polish throne, the French emperor sent orders through Frederick Augustus and then directly to Warsaw. Actual direction of the army was left to the French and French allied Polish generals such as Prince Josef Poniatowski.

⁶²Black, *From Louis XIV to Napoleon*, 78–84, 108, 130–1; cf. Jeremy Black, 'Hanover/England, Saxony/Poland. Political Relations Between States in the Age of Personal Union and Aims', in *Die Personalunionen von Sachsen-Polen 1697–1763 und Hannover-England 1714–1837 Ein Vergleich*, (ed.) Rex Rexheuser (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2005), 431–54.

Russian sea power was also considerable in the Baltic and Mediterranean. The Russians were able to dispatch an army to Holland in 1799, and furthermore their occupation of Corfu provided them with a staging area in the central Mediterranean. Napoleon initially perceived Russia as a viable ally against Austria and Britain for the very reasons mentioned. In 1800, a Russo-French alliance nearly came to fruition. The League of Armed Neutrality, which reemerged in 1800–01, included the Baltic powers of Russia, Sweden and Denmark. After Rear-Admiral Lord Nelson sailed into Copenhagen in April 1801, a second British squadron sailed on to Reval, prepared to do the same. The assassination of Tsar Paul, however, and Alexander's increasing hostility toward Napoleon's ambitions after 1803, altered the situation.⁶³

The transformation of Italy between 1803 and 1806 removed any direct Russian threat, but their presence in the Mediterranean continued to be a problem until Tilsit in 1807. The campaign in Poland that year, combined with the dramatic alteration of the German states, provided Napoleon with opportunity to roll the Russians back to Eastern Europe. The creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw on 22 July 1807 with Augustus I of Saxony, as the Grand Duke, provided Napoleon with the outward appearance of compromising with Alexander on the nature of a reconstituted Polish state. Russia had backed the Saxons as kings of Poland since the early eighteenth century until the partitions. There is no question that the role of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw was that of buffer between Russia and central Europe. The Russians certainly perceived it as a point that needed redressing, and the capture of Warsaw took precedence over a concerted drive on Berlin during operations in January–February 1813.⁶⁴

⁶³Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics*, 30; Wilson, *Reich to Revolution*, 331; See section II in this article: 'Dalmatia, the Balkans and Illyria', for Russia's role in the Mediterranean; Roderick McGrew, *Paul I of Russia: 1754–1801* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1992), 311–2; Hugh Ragsdale, 'A Continental System in 1801: Paul I and Bonaparte', *Journal of Modern History* 42/1 (March 1970), 76–7; De Clerq, *Recueil des Traités*, I, 467–75; Martens, *Recueil des Traités conclus par la Russie*, VI, 337, 341–5, 350–1; II, 397–400, refers particularly to Russian involvement in negotiations preceding the *Reichdeputations-Hauptschluss*. For Austrian concern about Russia, see Frederick C. Schneid, 'The Grand Strategy of the Habsburg Monarchy during the War of the Third Coalition', *Selected Papers of the Consortium on the Revolutionary Era*, 2007 (2008), 313–21.

⁶⁴Frederick C. Schneid, 'The Dynamics of Defeat: French Army Leadership, December 1812–March 1813', *Journal of Military History* 63/1 (Jan. 1999), 22–5.

The Grand Duchy became the staunchest of Napoleon's satellites, providing reliable and willing soldiers for Napoleon's Imperial Army.⁶⁵ As much as the Poles disliked Austria's hand in their kingdom's partition, animus toward Russia was the common thread. Yet, the Grand Duchy provided strategic benefits. The restoration of the Saxons in Warsaw threatened Prussia and Austria as much as Russia.⁶⁶ In the latter case, Napoleon's willingness to strip Prussia of its Polish spoils was a threat to Vienna too as a pro-French Poland posed a strategic threat to Galicia (Austrian Poland). 'Your majesty will, without a doubt, give the command of Polish troops to Prince Poniatowski.' Napoleon wrote Frederick Augustus I, King of Saxony and Grand Duke of Warsaw, 'They must threaten Galicia, which will compel the Austrians to maintain considerable forces there.'⁶⁷ When, in early 1809, Austria mobilized for war, it deployed 33,000 men under the Archduke Ferdinand to campaign in the Grand Duchy. Ferdinand was to strike to Warsaw, and prevent a Polish uprising in Galicia.⁶⁸

This was precisely what Napoleon desired; to force the Austrians to divert troops from their main theater of war (Germany) and to address potential threats. Furthermore, he played upon Russian interests in Austrian Poland by offering it to Tsar Alexander in return for military assistance against Austria. Alexander obliged and occupied Galicia until 1814.⁶⁹ Russia's willingness to side with France in 1809, is

⁶⁵The Army of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw amounted to 30,000 men in 1809, and 60,000 by 1812. Half the Polish Army was in Spain in 1809. Charrier, *Le Maréchal Davout*, 268; Roman Soltyk, *Relations des Opérations de l'Armée aux ordres du Prince Joseph Poniatowski, pendant le campagne de 1809 en Pologne contre les Autrichiens* (Paris: Gaultier-Laguionie 1841), 39.

⁶⁶For Prussia's strategic dilemma in 1809 see, John H. Gill, "'I Fear Our Ruin is Very Near': Prussian Foreign Policy during the Franco-Austrian War of 1809", *Selected Papers of the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe*, 2002 (Tallahassee, FL, 2004), 281–91.

⁶⁷Napoleon to Frederick Augustus I, 6 March 1809, Napoleon, *Correspondence de Napoleon I^{er}*, XVIII, no. 14864, 318.

⁶⁸Soltyk, *Opérations de l'Armée aux Poniatowski*, 131–4.

⁶⁹Philip Garland, 'Russia and the 1809 Campaign: "These are not the actions of an ally"', *Selected Papers of the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe*, 1997 (Tallahassee, 1997), 461–71. Garland argues that Alexander played a double-game, using Russian forces in Galicia to prevent a Polish uprising in favor of the Polish army under Poniatowski, and the enlargement of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. It is abundantly clear that the Poles and the Russian army under Golitsyn did not cooperate. Nonetheless, although Alexander desired to prevent the expansion of Napoleonic Poland, he was willing to occupy Galicia at Austria's expense, and keep that territory given to Austria in 1795. Regardless of Alexander's general antipathy for Napoleon, Russian intervention in 1809 was not perceived favorably in Vienna.

significant in Napoleon's ability to play the two powers off the other, thereby creating a wedge between them.

Satellites, Clients and War with Britain

'Sicily is everything, Gaeta is nothing,' Napoleon wrote to his brother Joseph nine weeks after the invasion of Naples.⁷⁰ The conquest of the Neapolitan kingdom was not a forgone conclusion until the dramatic victories of 1805. Relations with King Ferdinand IV appeared firm until the autumn 1805 when the King betrayed his neutrality agreement with France, and permitted an Anglo-Russian expeditionary force to use his kingdom as a base of operations in Italy.⁷¹ The deployment of a coalition army to Naples reinforced the strategic significance of the Italian boot to the security of Napoleonic Italy. A Spanish-Bourbon dynasty had sat on the Neapolitan throne since the conclusion of the War of Polish Succession (1738). When in 1799, a French army under General Jean Championnet overran the kingdom a popular insurrection, supported by the British fleet combined with an Austro-Russian offensive in northern Italy, led to the rapid collapse of the short-lived Parthenopean Republic.

King Ferdinand IV of Naples, cousin of Charles IV, King of Spain, understood the precarious situation his kingdom faced in the wake of the Peace of Amiens (1801). Neapolitan security had been tied inexorably to a British alliance. The position of Naples and its possession of the island of Sicily made it extremely vital to the British in the Mediterranean. French acquisition of Corsica in 1768, and the Bourbon Family Compact of 1779 during the American Revolution, led to the exclusion of the Royal Navy from the central and eastern Mediterranean. Logistical limitations from Gibraltar prevented further penetration of that sea. The implications of strategic limitations were seen when Bonaparte's expedition captured Malta *en route* to Egypt in 1798.⁷²

The Treaty of Florence ended hostilities between the French Republic and the Kingdom of Naples on 28 March 1801, but more significantly it provided for French occupation of the Neapolitan ports of Taranto, Brindisi and Otranto.⁷³ French occupation allowed the Toulon fleet to stage out of southern Italy, which was much closer to Corfu, Greece

⁷⁰Napoleon to Joseph, 19 May 1806, Napoleon, *Correspondance*, XII, no. 10250, 383.

⁷¹See Flayhart, *Counterpoint to Trafalgar*, *passim*.

⁷²Mackesey, *War in the Mediterranean*, 12–7 on the strategic significance of Sicily and Malta.

⁷³De Clerq, *Receuil des Traités*, I, 432–5; Ilari *et al.*, *Storia Giacobina*, II, 1165–6.

and Egypt, than Malta. Upon the conclusion of the Peace of Amiens, Napoleon withdrew his forces from the Italian kingdom, but when in May 1803 peace with Britain collapsed, the French returned despite Neapolitan misgivings.⁷⁴

Neapolitan neutrality through November 1805 was a chimera. Ferdinand signed an agreement confirming his intent to keep his kingdom out of the conflict, but had already given his assent for the use of his territory as a base of operations for a coalition expeditionary force. The utter incompetence of the allied expedition, and Napoleon's decisive victory over the Third Coalition sealed the Bourbon king's fate. Within two months of Austerlitz, a French army led by Marshal André Masséna, accompanied by Napoleon's eldest brother Joseph, invaded Naples, and made quick work of its army. Joseph became king, and Naples a satellite.⁷⁵ Ferdinand IV and the royal family were whisked away by the British to Sicily, which became the base of operations for Britain in the Mediterranean.

Britain faced growing crises in the North Sea too. In the same letter Napoleon wrote to Joseph in May 1806 concerning the importance of Sicily, he also said, 'the affairs with Holland have been arranged and in a short time Louis [Bonaparte] will be King of Holland.'⁷⁶ The Batavian Republic survived the establishment of the French Empire by two years. No such grace period was granted to its Italian counterpart. Unlike Italy, the historical memory of Franco-Dutch relations did not provide for an extensive foundation. Although the Dutch and French made common cause in 1780 during the American Revolution, it was more a commercial opportunity, than a decidedly focused state policy that led Britain and the Netherlands to war.⁷⁷ In fact, until the 1750s the Dutch had been a pillar of anti-French alliances. The dramatic alteration of the European international system in the 1750s threw the Netherlands into the strategic abyss, having to look at allies as enemies and vice versa.⁷⁸

⁷⁴Ferdinand entered into a secret agreement with the British upon the collapse of Amiens, see Virgilio Ilari, *La Due Sicile nelle Guerre Napoleoniche (1800–1815)* (Rome: Stato maggiore dell'esercito, Ufficio storico 2005), I, 23–8, 32–5. Cf. Schneid, *Napoleon's Conquest of Europe*, 69–75, for the role of Naples in French, British and Russian grand strategic thought.

⁷⁵For a short discussion of the French campaign in Naples see, Frederick C. Schneid, *Napoleon's Italian Campaigns, 1805–1815* (Westport, CT: Praeger 2002), 47–58; for an in-depth examination see Ilari, *La Due Sicile*, I, 44–102.

⁷⁶Napoleon to Joseph, 19 May 1806, Napoleon, *Correspondence*, XII, no. 10250, 385.

⁷⁷Simon Schama, *Patriots and Liberators: Revolution in the Netherlands, 1780–1813* (New York: Vintage Books 1977), 58–9.

⁷⁸Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1998), 1094–6.

Domestic troubles culminated in a revolution preceding the one in France by two years. Prussian military intervention in 1787 made short work of the 'Patriot Revolution,' and gave reason for Dutch affinity toward the French after 1789. The invasion of Holland, followed by the creation of the Batavian Republic on 3 February 1795, was welcomed by many, and decried by others, but nonetheless the relationship between France and the Batavian Republic seemed tenable. Unfortunately, the relationship gradually soured as the economic burden of tribute to France and war with Britain turned ideological dreams into genuine nightmares. According to historian Jonathan Israel, the republic was, 'crushed beneath the inexorable pressures of global war, caught between the irresistible force of Napoleon and the immovable object of British power.'⁷⁹ From a purely military perspective, the French alliance with the Netherlands could be valued in ships, troops and colonies.

After 1796, the French could count the Batavian Republic and Bourbon Spain among their allies. This alliance of two revolutionary republics and an *ancien regime*, were dedicated to the destruction of the British Empire in the Caribbean and East Indies. Britain reacted swiftly to the naval threat with two crucial victories over the Dutch at Camperdown and the Spanish at Cape St Vincent. The Royal Navy followed its successes in 1799 by capturing the Dutch Fleet at Texel. Holland had little to contribute to the French cause thereafter.⁸⁰ The weakening of Dutch naval power put its colonial empire in peril. Peace with Britain came none too soon on 1 October 1801, as the Wellesleys' conquests in India, and the British occupation of Ceylon put the entire East Indies at risk. Napoleon understood this, and successfully negotiated the return of occupied Dutch colonies excluding Ceylon at Amiens.⁸¹

The Dutch also held Cape Town, a strategic position on the sea route to Asia. This too fell to Britain in 1806, the same year the Batavian Republic transmogrified into the Kingdom of Holland, with a Bonaparte on its throne. Thereafter, Holland's value to France can only be understood in terms of denying it to her enemies and as a pool for revenue and manpower. Although Dutch naval yards pursued a vigorous construction campaign, the ships never put to sea. By July 1810, Napoleon dispensed with the charade of autonomy, removed Louis and absorbed his kingdom directly into the French Empire.⁸²

⁷⁹Ibid., 1127.

⁸⁰Schama, *Patriots and Liberators*, 282, 392–4.

⁸¹De Clerq, *Recueil des Traités*, I, 484–91.

⁸²Schama, *Patriots and Liberators*, *passim*.

Satellites such as the Kingdom of Holland formed part of the larger whole of Napoleon's Continental System. Economic warfare as a tool against Great Britain began long before the Berlin and Milan decrees of 1806/07. Bonaparte found the blockade of British goods to the European continent an effective tool during the Consulate. In late 1800, Napoleon encouraged the League of Armed Neutrality in northern Europe – Prussia, Russia, Sweden and Denmark – resulting in a brief Prussian occupation of Hanover. In 1801 he further enticed his Spanish allies to attack Portugal, one of Britain's last continental friends. Napoleon believed that these policies were fundamentally responsible for bringing London to the negotiating table at Amiens.⁸³

Napoleon pursued a similar strategy after the collapse of the Peace of Amiens with a French occupation of the Electorate of Hanover in May/June 1803, the closure of the Elbe and Weser rivers, and the Hanseatic ports to British goods. Hanover had been an extremely useful royal possession for Great Britain. Although the conditions of the Hanoverian succession prohibited the kings from using Britain to further Hanoverian interests, it was not uncommon for London to use Hanover for its own ends. It provided a continental base for sterling-paid German armies, and proved quite useful during the Wars of Austrian Succession and the Seven Years War. Britain's ability to raise German armies and use Hanover as a 'jumping off point' ended in May 1795, with the political restrictions of the Peace of Basel and the neutralization of northern Germany. Napoleon's military victories in 1805 and 1806, allowed him to extend his control over the region and deny Britain any and all of its continental connections.⁸⁴ Britain's ability to project its land power on the continent via an Anglo-German and Anglo-Dutch army ceased and it was not until 1809, with the French invasion of Spain, that London was able to deploy an Anglo-Allied (Portuguese) army on the continent.

The significance of northern Germany to Napoleon's British strategy can clearly be seen in its annexation to France during 1810, the same year as the inclusion of Holland into the French Empire. Napoleon

⁸³Schneid, *Napoleon's Conquest of Europe*, 21–2, 53–5, 58–9; Guy Stanton Ford, *Hanover and Prussia, 1795–1803; A Study in Neutrality* (New York: AMS Press 1967), Chapters 7 and 8.

⁸⁴A fascinating examination of the impact of the Napoleonic Wars on Anglo-Hanoverian relations can be found in Brendan Simms, "'An Odd Question Enough'", Charles James Fox, the Crown and British Policy during the Hanoverian Crisis of 1806', *Historical Journal* 38/3 (Sept. 1995), 567–96; John Sherwig, *Guineas and Gunpowder, British Foreign Aid in the Wars with France, 1793–1815* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP 1969), 17, 77; and Wilson, *German Armies*, 312; cf. Black, 'Hanover/England, Saxony/Poland', 431–54.

appointed Marshal Louis-Nicholas Davout military governor of that region to ensure the enforcement of the Continental System.⁸⁵ Napoleon extended his control of the North Sea littoral in 1807, by actively pursuing a Danish alliance. The kingdom's possession of the Duchy of Holstein compelled it to address the substantial changes in German affairs. Denmark's past commercial conflicts with Britain, including the attack on Copenhagen in 1801, placed it squarely between a British naval threat, and a French continental threat. To that end, and despite distrust of the French Emperor, the Danes concluded that an alliance with Napoleon would secure Holstein, allowing them to continue their war with the Swedes – an enemy of France – and improve relations with Russia – a new French ally.⁸⁶ Britain responded to the Franco-Danish alliance with a second attack on Copenhagen that same year, destroying or capturing much of the Danish Fleet.

Napoleon, then, could count all of Europe, save Portugal, within the Continental System by late 1807. The problem, however, was that Spain's strategic role as a lynchpin in the war against Britain changed after 1805. The Bourbon Family Compacts of the eighteenth century, reaffirmed in 1796 and 1801 in the Treaty of San Ildefonso, centered on a naval and colonial conflict with Great Britain.⁸⁷ The failure to achieve naval superiority demonstrated at Cape St Vincent and Trafalgar, coupled with the many other failures of the Spanish Fleet, limited Spain's utility. Its silver was plentiful, but already spent before it left the Central American docks.⁸⁸ Its army was poorly equipped, and quite small. Even Napoleon's demand for Spanish troops in Italy in 1805, and in north Germany in 1806, met with enormous resistance from the Spanish royal favorite and Generalissimo Manuel de Godoy.⁸⁹

⁸⁵Charrier, *Le Maréchal Davout*, 432–56.

⁸⁶For a concise survey see Ole Feldbaeck, 'Denmark in the Napoleonic Wars: A Foreign Policy Survey', *Scandinavian Journal of History* 26/2 (June 2001), 89–101; Christer Jorgensen, *The Anglo-Swedish Alliance against Napoleonic France* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2004), 87–9.

⁸⁷De Clerq, *Receuil des Traités*, I, San Ildefonso, 287–92, for convention against Portugal, 420–3, for convention against Britain, II, 117–9.

⁸⁸For Spain's economic crisis see Jacques Barbier, 'Peninsular Finance and Colonial Trade: The Dilemma of Charles IV's Spain', *Journal of Latin American Studies* 12/1 (1980), 21–37; cf. Jacques Barbier and Herbert Klein, 'Revolutionary Wars and Public Finances: The Madrid Treasury, 1784–1807', *Journal of Economic History* 41/2 (June 1981), 315–39.

⁸⁹André Fugier, *Napoléon et l'Espagne (1799–1808)* (Paris: F. Alcan 1930), II, 30–1.

By August 1807, Napoleon determined to close Portuguese ports by French intervention, and perhaps alter the political landscape of Spain. The invasion of Portugal in November 1807, followed by the occupation of Spain from February 1808, was a direct and purposeful policy to shore up the weakest link in the Imperial chain. It became one of Napoleon's two greatest blunders, the other being the invasion of Russia, but it was all part of his design to establish a grand empire of satellites and client states to support and extend the Napoleonic imperium. Instead of strengthening the Continental System, the war in Peninsula drained the French Empire of men, material and morale.⁹⁰

Conclusion

The Austrian War of 1809 and the campaign of 1813 provide clear examples of the extent to which Napoleon's satellites proved vital to the Empire's military power. Certainly, beginning in 1805, the percentage of allied troops in Napoleon's imperial armies increased, to their height in 1812. It is in 1809, however, that the Grand Empire was first tested. In that campaign, Napoleon, with a quarter million men in Spain, found his position in central Germany threatened by Habsburg mobilization. French forces were scant, no more than 60,000 immediately available in Germany. The Archduke Charles contended with war on multiple fronts, in Germany, Italy, Dalmatia and Poland. The British were supportive of Habsburg efforts, but had limited options for continental commitments beyond Spain, and Russia and Prussia balked at any alliance.

Austro-Russian negotiations during the months preceding the campaign were intense. For all appearances, the Austrian envoy at Saint Petersburg, Prince Karl zu Schwarzenberg, made significant progress in eliciting Russian neutrality in the coming conflict, yet looks were deceiving. A full year earlier, Clemens von Metternich, then Austrian ambassador to France, was decidedly distrustful of the Russians, and Tsar Alexander's erratic moods.⁹¹ There had always been wariness of Russian interests in Vienna, and the Peace of Tilsit in July 1807, followed by the affirmation of the Franco-Russian alliance at Erfurt in October 1808 did not reduce the strength of the anti-Russian faction in Austria. Even the Archduke Ferdinand, commanding Habsburg forces in Galicia remained extremely wary of Tsar

⁹⁰For the most recent and comprehensive account of the Peninsular War see Charles Esdaile, *The Peninsular War: A New History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2003).

⁹¹Adolf Beer, *Zehn Jahre österreichischer Politik, 1801–1810* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus 1877), 344–5; cf. Garland, 'Russia and the 1809 Campaign', 461–71.

Alexander's pledge to send an army into Galicia, but very slowly, and with no intention of fighting the Austrians.⁹²

The Archduke Charles developed his war plans with the clear understanding that the Habsburg monarchy was surrounded by French and French-allied states. His initial strategy envisioned multiple offensives, with the objectives of 'Warsaw, Dresden, Bamberg, Donaüworth, Munich, Innsbruck, Brixen and Verona.'⁹³ The first draft, in January 1809, called for the central effort in Germany, with the deployment of the main army in Bohemia. This often-vaunted initial plan, was entirely predicated upon the notion that Prussia would make common cause with Austria. Its reduced army of 42,000 would form the right wing of Austria's army.⁹⁴ Nowhere did Charles factor Russia into the equation.

Although Charles abandoned the first plan in favor of a deployment along the River Inn, he hoped that he could knockout Bavaria with a preemptive strike, before Napoleon arrived in Germany with reinforcements. An offensive into Italy might yield success, and operations in Dalmatia and Poland would neutralize those theaters of war. Unfortunately, none of this bore fruit. The *Rheinbund* princes held to their obligations, and provided the majority of manpower in the first weeks of the war. The Austrians did capture Warsaw, but Tsar Alexander accepted Napoleon's carrot of Galicia (Austrian Poland), and the Russian army's seizure of Cracow and Lvov led to the withdrawal of the Habsburg army from the Grand Duchy. French troops and Bosnian raids along the Military Border thwarted Austrian operations in Dalmatia. Initial victory by Archduke John's army in Italy was short-lived, and within weeks, he was in full retreat to Hungary. The major British expedition to Walcheren Island proved no threat to Antwerp at all, even to the paltry Dutch forces under King Louis Bonaparte. Prussia remained aloof. The Bavarians contained the popular insurrection in the Tyrol, and the various military uprisings in Germany under Major Ferdinand von Schill, the Duke of Brunswick and Lieutenant Frederick von Katte did not elicit any substantial response on the part of the German people.

If one looks at the spring campaign of 1813, the situation is rather similar. The Russians and Prussians lacked sufficient allies and

⁹²Alexander's pledge can be found in Garland, 'Russia and the 1809 Campaign', 466, and Ferdinand's concerns are cited in Austria-Hungary, *Kriegsarchiv, Kriege unter der Regierung des Kaiser Franz: Krieg 1809, I: Regensburg* (Vienna: Seidel 1907), 210.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 169, 172-4.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 172; for the importance of Prussia to Austria's plans, see also Manfred Rauchensteiner, *Kaiser Franz und Erzherzog Carl: Dynastie und Heerwesen in Österreich 1796-1809* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg 1972), 95-8.

manpower to challenge Napoleon in the field, even though popular opinion in Germany was decidedly anti-French. The *Rheinbund* clients and his Italian satellites remained in the Napoleonic orbit, providing much needed soldiers to the Imperial armies. It was only two months after Austria's entrance into the war in August 1813 that Bavaria defected, while Frederick Augustus of Saxony held to the French alliance until coalition armies occupied his state after the Battle of Leipzig. The Kingdom of Westphalia was overrun, and that of Italy did not fall until three weeks after Napoleon's abdication in April 1814. The Kingdom of Naples defected, but only in February 1814. How then can one explain the willingness of Napoleon's clients and satellites to maintain their respective allegiances to the Empire in the face of anti-French coalitions? The answer lies in the historical background of these alliances.

Napoleon built a European empire on the foundation of historic French relationships. This is clearly the case in Italy, Spain (before 1808) and Bavaria. The close association of Dutch revolutionaries with France after 1789 provided the groundwork for French infiltration culminating in the Kingdom of Holland. Saxony's desire to break from Prussia's grasp, and the inability of turning to Austria after 1805 placed it squarely in the French camp. Napoleon's willingness to restore the Saxons to Poland further sealed the alliance. Poland's three partitions in the eighteenth century and the earlier conflicts over the kingdom's throne made France a natural ally, as it had been under the Bourbons. The difference was Napoleon's ability to project French power to the east, assuring the restoration of at least part of the former kingdom. The encirclement of Austria and Prussia with Napoleonic clients and satellites, gave the French Emperor the strategic edge. Furthermore, his ability to incorporate all of the major powers, excluding Britain, as allies at one time or another ensured the security of his Empire. Napoleon, however, pursued '*imperium sine fine*,' an empire without end.⁹⁵ His inability to consolidate what he had gained and create a viable European political system ultimately became his undoing.

Dedication

This article is dedicated to Owen Connelly, whose classic work, *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms* (New York: Free Press 1965), inspired me to pursue the study of Napoleonic satellites many years ago.

⁹⁵Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book I, verse 278.

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