

An Imperial Bureaucracy under Stress: The first Napoleonic Empire, 1799–1814, as an Exercise in Stress under Crisis

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The Napoleonic state: a projected »well ordered police state«

There is consensus among historians that the Napoleonic period is undergoing a renaissance in its historiography, a process at work since at least since the publication of Stuart Woolf's »Napoleon's Integration of Europe« in 1991.¹ The challenges facing Napoleonic historians at the turn of the last century were manifold. The field had been dominated by military and diplomatic history, as well as biographical studies. It was, to a considerable extent, under-conceptualised; in terms of objective subject matter, it was greatly lacking in what might be termed »normal« political and social history, despite the wealth of archival sources available for its study. The building blocks for the change in historiographical direction were a myriad of local studies initiated all over Western and Central Europe, a process that is still ongoing.² The perceived need was simply to explore the nature of Napoleonic rule »on-the-ground« in the context of empirical knowledge of local conditions, and to better understand how the regime functioned »behind the lines« of the war zones and away from the corridors of power.³ This approach put great emphasis on the function of bureaucracy for the history of the

Napoleonic regime. However, conceptual analysis of bureaucracy as an entity in itself did not often emerge, because historians initially prioritised its examination as an active agent of an authoritarian state.⁴ Personnel studies tended to concentrate on its political character with reference to the preceding revolutionary period; local studies explored its activities and their impact on local communities. The Napoleonic regime deliberately and systematically debilitated the parliamentary political culture it inherited from the Revolution. Even if it did not dare dismantle parliamentary institutions, the electoral principle was extensively curtailed.⁵ Into the vacuum stepped the new bureaucracy. The real corridors of power now led to the Conseil d'État, a panel of apolitical experts chosen by the executive, not to a cabinet of elected ministers. It was through centralised authoritarian leadership, executed by a professional, effective bureaucracy, that the regime intended to remove France from the divisions of the Revolution,⁶ and to bring stability to all its territories.⁷

From its inception, the regime based its firmest claim to authority on utility. Napoleon and his collaborators knew that they could not attempt to seek legitimacy in traditional, Ancien-Régime terms, and even the imperial coronation of 1804 made no attempt

to foster a direct link between the Bourbons and the Bonapartes, stressing, instead, the new regime's roots in the Revolution and the need to stabilise its gains.⁸ Charismatic leadership always remained the preserve of the army, and was not the real thrust of the regime's search for solid foundations of acceptance by the French elites. Utility, through the restoration of public order, victory in foreign war, and a whole gamut of practical reforms all linked to the protection of property and personal safety, formed not just Napoleonic policy, but the expression of its right to rule. If the essence of the regime was utility, then its main tool to that end was its bureaucracy.⁹ The inner life of the Napoleonic bureaucracy needs more conceptual light shed upon it, given its powerful influence on the imperial state.

The context in which bureaucracy has found most attention is that of imperialism.¹⁰ Current historiography has turned its attention to placing the First Napoleonic Empire in the wider context of world empires as a land empire; as a supra-national empire; as an exercise in cultural imperialism and economic colonialism; and as the prototype for European unity. From this, its bureaucracy is coming to be evaluated in terms of an imperial bureaucracy, its empirical base stemming from the fact that so many local studies of the empire have not centred on France, but on its non-French territories.¹¹ Here, the immediate attention of historians has often been drawn to the interaction of French and non-French administrators, and to the impact of specific Napoleonic policies and practices on the non-French subjects of the empire, exploring the avenues of enquiry developed by historians of other imperialisms.

There has been much basic historiographical research to do in the last four decades, and the kind of thematic approach proposed by the current project has not featured widely in Napoleonic studies, for all the rich perspectives opened up by its renaissance of late. Discrepancy in the historiography has recently been addressed directly in two recent major, path-breaking monographs by the French historian Aurélien Lignereux, whose work offers the first comprehensive analysis of the Napoleonic bureaucracy 'at work' in the imperial departments.¹² This paper hopes to add to this new direction, exploring bureaucracies' functions from the perspective of the broader imperial experience of its members.

Stress and imperial expansion

This paper examines the First Napoleonic empire as an imperial experience, and is based on research drawn from those parts of the empire that stood outside what contemporary administrators termed 'old France' or 'the Interior'. It examines the workings of the Napoleonic bureaucracy and the magistracy in those parts of Europe that were directly annexed to France. At its height in 1812, the empire comprised 134 departments, 45 of which had been annexed to France in the course of its expansion since 1795. These regions, called collectively the *départements réunis* by contemporaries, included one-third of Italy, including the former national capitals of Turin, Genoa, Parma, Florence and Rome; the west bank of the Rhine in Germany, including the major centres of Cologne, Trier, Spire and Bonn; and the whole of modern Belgium and the Netherlands; and Catalonia. Large parts of modern Croatia and Slovenia were also, more briefly, administered directly from Paris, although not formally annexed.

The choice of this territorial range is two-fold. First, in these regions – as opposed to satellite states such as the Napoleonic kingdoms of Italy, Naples or Westphalia, for example – the apparatus and legislation of the Napoleonic state was imposed in unaltered form on the non-French populations, and often directly administered by French officials despatched from 'the interior' to make sure French norms were applied and enforced correctly. There were no buffers between the populations of these regions and the imperial government in Paris, in contrast to the situation in the satellite kingdoms. The corollary of this heavy, direct French presence was the intensive daily interaction of French imperialists with the newly-annexed subject populations at every level of the administration. Taken together, this set of circumstances created the conditions for what might reasonably be termed an imperial experience in a European context. Conditions were created for the emergence of stress in forms unique to imperial rule, not present in the 'the Interior' which might be termed the imperial metropole. The Napoleonic administrative system also possessed elements that could engender stress which were intrinsic to the system, and were carried with it into the 'départements réunis', where, in imperial circumstances, they often became more

severe for imperial civil servants than was the case in the interior.¹³ As will emerge, the Napoleonic empire's insistence on centralisation and, above all, uniformity in law and administration sought to create a very particular form of empire, foreshadowing the 'national empires' of the coming century.¹⁴ These factors created circumstances replete with potential for stress within its administration.

Creating order out of chaos: reconstruction after conquest

The nature of Napoleonic imperial expansion stood at odds with its political ethos, and this was the crux of the dilemma always faced by its imperial bureaucrats. The regime's chief claim to legitimacy was utility; its hopes for acceptance and support were all based on a commitment to the restoration of order, without which all other reforms were worthless.¹⁵ Restoring order meant a return to normalcy for the regime's administrés following the havoc of the revolutionary decade and the destruction wrought by French invasion, based on the rule of law, embodied in the Napoleonic Codes and which could only be brought about by an impartial, well-ordered bureaucracy imbued with a professional, rather than ideological, ethos. The bureaucracy's professional character solidified quickly over the period of Napoleonic rule between 1799 and 1814. Its cadres were at first drawn from the ranks of revolutionaries who had acquired professional training under the old regime, mixed with others who were felt to be politically reliable. They were very rapidly overtaken by younger men trained in the new lycées created by the regime, and then graduates of its new University and specialised Grandes Écoles; the bar for advocates was restored in 1802 and formal, academic qualifications were demanded for magistrates and procurators, as well as for lawyers, in 1804, displacing the revolutionary principles of election to administrative and judicial posts. First, the bureaucracy became the engine room of the new authoritarian state, then it rapidly became a bastion of professionalism.

Through this well-ordered public sphere, the wider polity would be appeased and reassured that the disorders and dangers of the recent past were over, and

would at least allow the Napoleonic state to govern. The regime defined this process and its outcome, by two terms: The first, *Amalgame*, denoted the (hoped-for) growing willingness of the political elites of all existing factions to accept its norms, embracing professionalism in public service. It meant active participation.

The second, *Ralliement*, had a more passive connotation: This policy admitted the continued persistence of past animosities – even towards the regime itself – and acknowledged the unwillingness of many political opponents to work actively with each other, or with the Napoleonic state. However, it also sought to create conditions in which those who chose to stand aside would refrain from opposition to the functioning of government and renounce the politics of revenge.¹⁶

Together, *Amalgame* and *Ralliement* became the touchstones of the regime's practical politics, and the former emerged as fundamental to the recruitment of its bureaucracy.¹⁷ When imported into the regime's non-French possessions, these two policies often became entangled in issues of collaboration with foreign occupation and conflicted loyalties, and were introduced under conditions that were far from conducive to the Napoleonic conception of a normal, well-ordered state – centralised, authoritarian and de-politicised. The regime saw itself as an authoritarian administrative monarchy, but it found itself ruling territories where neither its legitimacy nor its bureaucracy could easily embed themselves.

Administration in the context of constant imperial expansion: perpetual crisis

The Napoleonic episode in European history has often been interpreted as a major crisis in itself: a period of war, upheaval and radical reform at every level that engendered dislocation and discontinuity on a macro scale across much of the continent.¹⁸ The incontrovertible fact is that Napoleonic rule was marked by volatility. War had expanded the Napoleonic hegemony, and the new territories entered its orbit in some degree of post-war chaos that the new regime had to quell. Napoleonic

rule was the result of foreign invasion that, in turn, led to a foreign occupation. The wars carved out new frontiers and brought new administrators and magistrates, as well as new administrative structures and legal codes, into areas where they had been hitherto unknown. The populations of these regions had already been traumatised by war and its repercussions, and now had to navigate alien forms of authority, usually run by alien, French administrators and magistrates. This was a process that renewed itself throughout the period, and the empire grew until it reached its height in 1811.¹⁹

Seen in this context, the Napoleonic empire can be defined as a perpetual crisis, as a prolonged exercise in stress across the entirety of European society. In these circumstances, the crisis was not just one that engulfed the conquered populations of the empire, but the bureaucracy set to rule over them. Indeed, the fundamental goal of the initial process of internal pacification – or systematic repression – that followed the imposition of Napoleonic rule was designed to render a given region secure enough for the imperial administration to function in it. The suppression of revolts, banditry and less-overt expressions of subversion was intended to be confined to the first phase of imperial rule, and if successful, was meant to lessen the impact of the external causes of stress to the administration. The vision of a well-ordered police state with a Napoleonic Mandarinate at its core often remained a project, rather than a reality – an aspiration, rather than a realisation.²⁰ The historical reality was a regime usually at war after 1805, and of constantly expanding and fluctuating imperial boundaries. The empire and its servants were under constant stress.

French rule everywhere was preceded by conventional warfare, and usually by mass revolts that straddled the invasion and the first months of occupation. Many areas immediately bordering France – modern Belgium, the Rhineland, Piedmont and Catalonia – had long-established, almost atavistic traditions of resistance to French invasions, dating back at least to the 17th century and the wars of Louis XIV.²¹ The regular and irregular militias and guerrilla forces that challenged the invasions did not disappear after the French conquest, but often mutated into banditry. By so doing, they often simply reverted to their original peacetime practices, for France was surrounded by

small, weak states with porous borders – conditions that facilitated brigandage and smuggling, even in peaceful times.²² In a climate of post-war chaos, now often politicised by regime change and stalked by economic dislocation, banditry became endemic and more dangerous than in the past because the core of the bands was now often formed by well-armed men hardened by military experience. Economic dislocation – usually aggravated by the depredations of the French armies of occupation – produced large-scale peasant revolts driven by subsistence crises, as well as anti-French hatred.²³ Every region bordering eastern France that was subsequently annexed to France – from Belgium, through the Rhineland, into Central Italy – experienced peasant insurgencies of this kind in the period spanning 1798 to 1801. Mass, collective unrest was usually swiftly suppressed, but banditry could take years to uproot. Generally, by about 1806–1807, those regions occupied in the first years of the Consulate were considered to have been ›pacified‹, and these formed a macro-region that might be brought together as ›the inner empire‹ and considered almost as part of the metropole.²⁴

This pattern was repeated in those parts of Europe that were annexed to France in the years 1806–1811, when the Empire reached its maximum extent: This ›outer empire‹ comprised the modern Netherlands; the North Sea coast of Germany; Central Italy; Catalonia; and the former Habsburg territories of modern Slovenia, parts of Croatia, eastern Tyrol and Carinthia. In these places, pacification was never fully achieved, and the French administration had to function in conditions where external sources of stress continued to be the norm throughout the occupation. Indeed, in some of the furthest-flung parts of the annexed departments in Catalonia, French administrators were in constant fear of their lives from local, armed resistance, some having to flee their centres of government almost periodically during 1810–1814.²⁵ This had often been the case for their counterparts in Piedmont, the Piacentino, and some of the Belgian departments a decade before, when assassinations, kidnappings and hit-and-run raids were frequent, but in the departments of the outer empire, such convulsed conditions seldom abated.

Despite these often-perilous conditions, Paris introduced the full panoply of its state apparatus with great speed everywhere. Even the transitional,

preparatory periods – which ranged from 18 months or two years in the early annexation, to as little as a few weeks in the later ones – required the presence of civilian commissioners to create, locate and staff the permanent institutions of civilian rule. External stress dominated the life of the bureaucracy at such points. The further down the administrative ladder an administrator or magistrate was, the more exposed he became to danger – particularly around the enforcement of conscription – and the more difficult it was for the basic work of local government to be carried out, not least because the local notables whose active participation in the bureaucracy was essential were reluctant, or wholly unwilling, to collaborate. When they did come forward, pressure from their administrés made collaboration difficult, with the threat of violence never far from the surface. In 1803, a Piedmontese magistrate advised the Prefect of the Stura to accept the resignation of the mayor (maire) of the turbulent commune of Valloria:

*He is an honest man and respectable, but his timidity and lack of resolve lead me to believe that he is not up to doing the job, especially in that commune, where opinions are rather strongly held.*²⁶

In 1804, 63 maires from this department, almost all of them from small, mountain communes, were made to resign.²⁷ The French sub-prefect of Simmern, in the Rhenish department of Rhin et Moselle, told Paris in 1803 that the public prosecutor (procureur) and his deputy needed to be held by Frenchmen, »because long experience has proved only too well that local people are usually too obliging and too weak to execute the laws.«²⁸ Six years later, it was reported that four maires of this small, isolated part of the Vosges had been jailed for conscription fraud; they had been trying to protect the local youth from the war against Austria that year, and themselves from popular violence, as well as trying to make some money for themselves.²⁹ Isser Woloch's observations in a purely French context – that the laxness and incompetence of the maires over conscription became insupportable, as prefects denounced maires for worrying more about their constituents than the needs of the state³⁰ – were echoed all over the annexed departments. Amalgame became almost impossible at local level in these conditions, even if rampant disorder

and the threat to life and property often engendered a degree of Ralliement in those same local elites, who were desperate to have some form of state control to protect the civil order.

The demands of war: the sources of continuing crises

The foreign nature of imperial rule, together with the material exigencies of an empire constantly at war, ensured that, even in the relatively assimilated macro-region of the inner empire, external factors producing stress from external sources never ceased. The imposition of mass conscription through tri-annual levies, punitive taxation, and the introduction of the Continental Blockade after 1806 all contributed to the perpetuation, or the resurgence, of banditry and small-scale rebellion in otherwise pacified places. Conscription was imposed throughout the empire in a uniform manner, and its smooth operation was seen as the key test for the efficiency of the bureaucratic machine at local level; the regime regarded the proper execution of the process as the most important task of its civil servants.³¹ It was also the moment of maximum stress for them in the routine calendar of the administrative year. Conscription, with its attendant problems, was common to the entire Napoleonic empire, but in the imperial context of the non-French departments, it is important to remember that this institution was suddenly thrust upon the populations of states, the majority of which had never known compulsory military service before. The imperial bureaucracy was dealing with communities in shock, and soon enraged, by the new burden placed upon them. This was all to be done through a system of civil administration largely alien to them, and supervised under a new legal system in a foreign language.

The basic administrative unit of the process of Napoleonic conscription was the department. During the three-week long period of its operation, which took place at least three times a year (four, in the later years of the Empire), the prefect was in charge of the whole process and of all branches of local government. The operation of conscription – the levée (literally, the lifting) – required the pairing of sophisticated bureaucratic

management with brutal, naked repression, the combination of which tested local government to the limits. Its bureaucratic machinery was at full stretch to cope with the paperwork needed to process the induction of the conscripts into service, while the very fact of conscription was assured to put law and order at considerable risk, pushing peasant communities to the point of open revolt and provoking riots in many urban areas.³²

The distribution of numbers to all eligible males for the conscription levee took place at the second lowest administrative level, the canton – the seat of both the police commissioners and the justices of the peace, who oversaw the drawing of the numbers (the tirage). The prefect toured his department in person to supervise this in every canton, meaning he was absent from his chef-lieu for as much as three months of the year. The coercive nature of conscription was made clear because the prefect journeyed across his department at the head of an armed column (the *colonne mobile*) composed of gendarme brigades, and the departmental reserve company, drawn from veterans of the regular army. This heavy-handed military presence was very necessary: conscription was known as ›the blood tax‹ by peasant communities across the length and breadth of the empire. The *colonne mobile* was needed to force prospective conscripts into the canton chef lieux for the tirage; to escort those conscripted to the military depots in the departmental chef lieu; and to search out and arrest those who sought to evade conscription. Its role was also to suppress any attempts by local communities to resist the operation of conscription, and where resistance by a village or hamlet proved determined, to occupy it and seize hostages from among its leading taxpayers. The march of the *colonne mobile* across the cantons was known officially as the *battue générale*, ›the scouring of the department‹. The same term was used for hunting wolves and bears. Needless to say, the *colonne mobile* was also needed to protect the prefect and the other local officials.

For all concerned, conscription was a tri-annual ordeal. In more thoroughly-pacified, geographically-accessible departments, conscription usually functioned without serious incident, but it still placed the administrative and policing resources of the state apparatus under stress as the administrative burden

on the bureaucracy augmented until the levée was over. The prefects' prolonged absences eventually obliged the regime to create deputy (sub) prefects for the departmental chef lieux to cope with these burdens; in some places, prefects' wives assumed routine administrative tasks during the *battue générale*.

In mountainous and border regions, or wherever the terrain offered communities the means of resistance, conscription was usually a bloody business. As the institutions of the state became embedded, the Gendarmerie above all – resistance to conscription – seldom reached a crisis point, but it was a constant and recurring source of localised turbulence that never allowed local administrators to feel secure. It is, perhaps, a damning, and certainly a revealing comment on the nature of Napoleonic rule that the successful administration of conscription was deemed essential for any hopes of promotion. Mastering recurrent stress was prized more highly than entrenching calm routine for a regime constantly at war.

The impact of the strategy of economic warfare on the imperial administration

The imposition of the Continental Blockade along the entire coastline of the empire and its allies from 1807 onwards placed local government under severe pressure, as the whole range of officialdom – magistrates and administrators, as well as customs officers and the Gendarmerie – struggled to eradicate, or even just contain, smuggling. An entire separate court system was created to cope with smugglers and the contraband goods they trafficked in; coastal areas, particularly in the Dutch and Belgian departments, were almost ruled by the agents of the customs service.³³ All this led to an ever-increasing reliance on French personnel who were rushed in to these trouble spots, but the diversion of crucial policing resources from other duties was inevitable. Perhaps still more worrying for the bureaucracy, however, was the near-collapse of the economies of the large port cities of the empire, and the dislocation and impoverishment of their societies that was attendant on the destruction of overseas commerce.

Defiance of the Blockade could be met with positive action; however futile in many instances, smugglers and their contraband could be intercepted and vigorous policing could prove successful. Economic and societal collapse was of a different order, however. Prefects and magistrates watched impotently, and with intense anxiety, as the populations in which they were meant to foster normalcy and prosperity sank into decay. This led to a growing sense of despair in the ranks of the bureaucracy that the task of rebuilding these areas might prove beyond the ability of the state.

These factors could seldom be characterised as reaching the level of ‘crises’ that threatened the safety of imperial rule. Nevertheless, they should be regarded as sources of localised, periodic turbulence that could exert considerable stress on local administrations. The foreign character of Napoleonic rule over most of its hegemony was a constant source of external stress for two principal reasons. First, alien administrative and judicial institutions and legislation inevitably engendered confusion among the occupied populations, which could often evolve into real resentment if the new procedures and regulations offended local usages or sensibilities. Secondly, the need to ensure the correct implementation of Napoleonic rule led – increasingly rather than decreasingly – to the embedding of French personnel at even the lowest levels of administration and justice in the annexed departments, placing French officials in exactly the most difficult, unstable regions of the empire.³⁴ This policy added yet another layer of stress – personal as much as structural – to all the other external stress factors that made so heavy a French presence necessary in the first place.

The sources of internally-triggered stress

The external pressures on the imperial bureaucracy were obvious, if often complex, but there were also elements intrinsic to the structures of the Napoleonic state apparatus that generated considerable degrees of internal stress. These characteristics were so central to its ethos that they created problems when transplanted to its non-French possessions.

The French administrative-judicial order was seen as holistic and unalterable; it did not permit significant change in any way, where it encountered regional or institutional conditions at variance with its norms. The regime had its own term for this: *le modèle inébranable*, which is still in use by the legal profession today. The key concepts of the Napoleonic system of government, derived from the early reforms of the French revolutionaries in the period spanning 1789 to 1792, are encapsulated in two words: Uniformity and centralisation. To impose uniformity on so diverse a hegemony as Western Europe, and then to govern it through a highly-centralised bureaucracy, placed enormous stress on its personnel.

The Napoleonic regime, from its inception, added two further key elements to the revolutionary inheritance: authoritarianism – which translated into administrative practice as a hierarchy that worked from the top down – and the reassertion of a professional ethos in both the administration and judiciary, in a direct rejection of the politically motivated, ideologically-driven practice of appointments that had prevailed during the 1790s.

These four foundational elements of the Napoleonic order, when applied in non-French circumstances, produced far-reaching ramifications for the workings of the bureaucracy. The recruitment of non-French, local administrators raised, on the one hand, the problem of collaboration with a foreign regime that had imposed itself by force, and created circumstances replete with political, ideological and personal tensions. Locals’ ties of loyalty to the regimes the French had overthrown often denied the French the services of exactly the kind of able, experienced civil servants and magistrates they most needed.

The two departments of the former Papal states proved an extreme example of this. Pius VII gave strict orders, equivalent to a Papal interdiction, to all public servants, lay or clerical, against serving the French on annexation. His orders were adhered to in a remarkable campaign of peaceful civil disobedience to such an extent that daily public services broke down almost completely, and only a counter-order by the Pope to comply with the French for the basic needs of the public prevented chaos. This did not extend to higher levels of government, and the French were never really able

to find enough collaborators to staff the courts or the departmental administrations.³⁵

As well as this, the professional standards demanded by the French, which were rigidly laid down by le modèle inébranable, often made it difficult to work with even those members of local elites who were prepared to collaborate. Louis-Joseph Faure, the French magistrate and councillor of state sent to organise the tribunals of the new Hanseatic departments, had a fundamentally favourable view of the senior magistrates of the region:

*When it comes to the definitive organisation (of the tribunals) I think I will find good elements to propose to you for the composition of the Cour Impériale and the tribunals. There are a good many well-educated and upstanding men, many who even know a little French.*³⁶

However, within a few months, he reported that many of these men had refused posts on the Cour Impériale because they did not want to move from their estates to Hamburg. Faure had to admit that Paris had been correct in issuing the decree of 14. July 1811, which had restricted the highest posts on the court – those of presidents and procureurs – to Frenchmen to ensure the proper administration of justice.³⁷ He might have added that this blocked any aspirations these ›highly educated, upstanding‹ magistrates may have had of real promotion. The functioning of le modèle inébranable came first, and denied the French the elite participation they initially sought. The French did not often help themselves in this. A senior procureur on the Cour Impériale of Rome, Gilbert Boucher, became exasperated with his Italian colleagues' lack of linguistic ability that he refused to speak anything but French in court, despite being fluent in Italian.³⁸

The behaviour of Boucher points to the wider problem of language that suffused the imperial bureaucracy. Pragmatism was applied to court proceedings easily enough; defendants and witnesses were questioned in their native languages, and day-to-day transactions in local administration were dealt with in similar fashion. The regime was at its most pragmatic in the last years of the empire, in its furthest-flung territories. The official languages of administration in the former Austrian provinces of Illyria remained German, and in those

previously under Venetian rule, Italian continued to be used. In the Catalan departments, French officials upheld the use of Catalan in court, and for oral transactions in the administration. This was often against the will of the Spanish-speaking legal classes, who eventually won the argument with Paris.³⁹

The real problems posed by language barriers came within the bureaucracy itself. All written work had to be done in French, even if it could also be translated into the local languages, and the deliberations of magistrates and procureurs, as opposed to examinations, had to take place in French. This caused tensions such as those displayed by Boucher in Rome, all over the imperial departments, if seldom so overtly. Above all, it seriously impacted recruitment. Paris had to scour ›the Interior‹ for Frenchmen competent in foreign languages, and the imperial departments for men able to cope in French. Paris's insistence on the exclusive use of French for all internal communications and official records with the central government, in so highly-centralised a system, erected considerable barriers for the workings of the bureaucracy at its higher and, especially, middle levels. The strictures of professionalism as defined by the regime put the bureaucracy under considerable pressure in the non-French departments.

The net result, in the main, was the emergence of administrative and judicial bureaucracies that were dominated by the French in the senior or middle management positions.⁴⁰ Napoleonic prefects and procureurs impériaux were always required to come from outside the department they served in, in the interests of impartiality and in accordance with the regime's maxim of the state as an arbitrator above faction. However, the appointment of completely foreign prefects across most of the non-French departments created outsiders of an altogether greater magnitude.⁴¹

The problem of collaboration within the imperial system

The imposition of Napoleonic rule entailed the suppression of all judicial and administrative prehistories. From this cast-in-iron maxim, many other sources of stress arose almost automatically: It meant that non-French elites who were co-opted to serve

within the imperial system were obliged to conform to entirely new, often quite alien, norms of working. Those who sought to ›amalgamate‹, to take an active part in the Napoleonic state, had to make enormous adjustments if they came from the previous system. The rigidity of the system made willing collaboration that much more difficult, in addition to the conflicts of political loyalties and personal complications that arose almost inevitably in the course of abrupt, often violent regime change. As a result, the availability of local collaborators with administrative or judicial experience was often severely reduced, leading, in turn, to the importation of growing numbers of Frenchmen to staff the bureaucracy and the courts. This often created constant, ingrained stress at the core of administrative institutions.

The courts, in particular, suffered from severe internally-generated stress, as French and non-French colleagues often had great difficulty working together. It greatly heightened the pressure on the *procureurs impériaux* on the courts, whose designated role in ›maintaining the internal discipline of the court‹ assumed a magnitude hitherto unforeseen: They had to inculcate the new legislation and the new process of administering justice to non-French magistrates, and also to act as a moderating influence between the French and non-French magistrates. In 1810, the Minister of Justice referred to ›the marked estrangement of most of the members of the court [of Pisa, in Tuscany] in adapting themselves to the forms demanded by French legislation‹.⁴² Such ill feelings were often reciprocal. In 1812, Isaac Gogel, a senior Dutch administrator, said openly to Martin Gaudin, Napoleon's minister of finance, that ›there is a spirit of bad humour and ill-will towards everything that is Dutch‹ among all the French administrators in the Dutch departments.⁴³

When these tasks were added to *procureurs*' main role as prosecutors for the state, it is not surprising that the complaints of the *procureurs* emerged as some of the richest, most trenchant sources for the analysis of stress in the Napoleonic imperial bureaucracy.⁴⁴ Recruitment from local populations became difficult as a result of the rigidity of the system. The French often inherited networks of patronage and clientage from the previous regimes at these levels, but their own standards of literacy or professional competence precluded them from admitting many people into the service. When

they relaxed these standards, it was out of desperation, and it resulted in tensions and complaints from French supervisors. In the eyes of the French on the ground, the choice was between dangerous levels of understaffing or the presence of inadequate personnel at the lower levels. The office of sub-prefect was intended to be the preserve of local men, to counter-balance the deliberate ›otherness‹ of the prefect. This was usually, but not always adhered to, yet it often produced difficult relationships. Even in the Dutch departments, whose local personnel were generally better-regarded by the French than in other regions, French prefects frequently complained of the locals' lack of zeal in dealing with unpopular policies like conscription, or that they simply followed prescribed administrative norms.⁴⁵

These problems specific to the recruitment of non-French personnel compounded the myriad difficulties faced by the French themselves, who underwent a process of uprooting themselves — in many cases, apart from their families — and adapting to wholly alien circumstances. These difficulties faced by administrators greatly hampered the regime's efforts to recruit the kind of experienced men it wanted in these areas.⁴⁶

The doctrine of the separation of powers: ideology versus pragmatism

Many of the particular problems related to recruitment were compounded by the doctrine of the separation of powers, which the regime considered fixed in stone. This should in no way be confused with the concept of the balance of powers at the heart of the British and American political systems of this period. The Napoleonic regime remained, to the end, uncompromisingly centralised and authoritarian. Rather, the separation of powers dictated that there was to be no overlap in judicial or administrative posts between either personnel or the functions of any administrative post, and the judicial, administrative, taxation and policing branches of government were all to be discrete in terms of both function and personnel, with plurality of office forbidden. This fundamental precept of the imperial state was by no means a given in many of its

new non-French territories. It was a particular problem in many of the areas previously under Habsburg rule, places where, in so many other respects, the French found administrators well-attuned to the ethos of professionalism, and the ethos of professionalism in an authoritarian hierarchy.⁴⁷ In 1813, a senior French official in the Illyrian provinces lamented his local subordinates in the former Habsburg territories:

*Numerous directives have had to be issued to remind these officials that the division of powers is essential to our legislation, which has no relationship to the idea these men still have that civil administrative and judicial powers are united in the hands of their former administrators.*⁴⁸

In peaceful, relatively well-absorbed areas, as in the Rhenish departments, the French departmental authorities often stood back in rural areas, and allowed a pseudo-bürgermeister system to continue. Michael Rowe has noted that »Paris enjoyed neither control over the appointment of nor disciplinary powers over these individuals«, but points to the admission by the French prefects that the system would have collapsed without them.⁴⁹

The empire was not always so fortunate. They were also forced to do this in very volatile territories, as in the Piacentino uplands of Northwestern Italy – the foyer of a major revolt in 1805–1806. Here, the prefect was forced to admit that topography was against anything but a highly decentralised system of local government, where the collection of taxes, the enforcement of conscription and maintenance of public order were left to deputy maires (adjoints) working independently in their tiny mountain hamlets. The prefect admitted that this was irregular, »but circumstances are such that it is impossible to do otherwise.«⁵⁰

The problems created by the doctrine of the separation of powers were further compounded by the strict division between Church and state. In the ex-Papal states, it deprived the French of almost all the senior administrators and magistrates in a country run by the Church.⁵¹ It deprived local government of perhaps the only literate men at its disposal, and thus was often ignored. In many rural communes in »the Interior« as much as in the départements réunis, the parish priest

was often the only truly literate person capable of holding down the post of maire, but was precluded from it.

The maire was always the weakest point in the Napoleonic administrative hierarchy,⁵² and the concept of the separation of powers actually aggravated this, rather than eased it. Le modèle inébranable increasingly proved itself inadequate to the challenges of local government. Its structures were dependent on finding more literate men than small, isolated rural communes – which comprised the bulk of the empire – could actually provide. Finding a competent, literate maire and juge de paix was difficult in itself, but when the task of finding clerks [greffiers] and adjoints for both of them without the participation of the parish clergy is added, le modèle inébranable emerges as a construct too far ahead of the realities of the era to work as intended. Clearly, at the lowest level of the hierarchy, the bureaucracy simply ground to a halt in the eyes of its superiors. This was where le modèle inébranable reached its stress point.

Most of the internally-triggered sources of stress outlined above were common to both the centre and the periphery of most regions under imperial rule. The concepts of centre and periphery translate into those of inner and outer empire at the meso level of Napoleonic Europe, but they acquire a different significance at the macro-level of geographic regions – specifically those of the Mediterranean, Atlantic and alluvial/central European components of the empire – and, above all, at the micro-level of the territories of individual annexed states. Centres and peripheries had many common problems for the imposition of the Napoleonic model of the state, but each posed challenges of their own for the new regime that its own structures only compounded. The French President of the Cour Impériale of Hamburg lamented to his superior in Paris that when it came to appointing juges de paix for the rural areas, »there are really no capable people«, so new and alien was the French legal system, and so badly paid the job.⁵³ There was also the problem of those maires who liked their position too much and used it for their own ends, often unchecked – or, more precisely, uncheckable – by their superiors. A senior French magistrate in the Piedmontese departments bewailed »the numerous abuses occasioned by the extreme powers invested in

some maires, who bring trouble and desolation into many families by fighting private vendettas.«⁵⁴

Yet, harmony among the local administrative elite could arouse suspicion as readily as discord. The French never had great confidence in the workings of local government. In 1813, the procureur impérial of Florence did not mince his words:

*I admit quite frankly, that when I see a maire, a juge de paix, and a parish priest in full agreement in their opinion of someone in their commune, I have trouble believing that they are motivated by anything other than their personal emotions.*⁵⁵

Embedded in this remark is an admission that the upper levels of the bureaucracy – in this case, the courts – simply did not really know what went on at local level. It was usually on the periphery that Napoleonic administrators felt themselves most challenged and where they most readily admitted to feelings of stress. These were partly the product of the system itself and its internally-triggered, structural problems in these environments, but French imperial servants seldom blamed them for their feelings of stress, so imbued were they with the state's ethos.

An isolated bureaucracy: cultural estrangement among the French administrators.

What binds these seemingly routine problems together into a cumulative internal crisis/pressure cooker, and not a mere check list, is the cultural isolation and estrangement the French felt, whether in relatively peaceful departments of the ›inner empire‹ or on the convulsed edges of the empire. The pressures of empire, always increased by imperial over-reach, made all these factors ever more intense. The empire became increasingly swollen by foreign territories that were increasingly alien to its ethos and extremely difficult to absorb, and this growth reached a particularly breakneck pace after 1806. The question grew in many minds: Was their task impossible?

Personal stress, imperial ideology and enlightened philosophy

The diplomatic historian Paul Schroeder, in his study of European international relations in this period, believed the Napoleonic empire to be a flawed enterprise, doomed to failure from the outset largely because of Napoleon's own personal inability to conceive of an international order without aggressive, expansionist conflict, »a wholly lawless politics.«⁵⁶ Schroeder's analysis seems extreme, but there were tangible threats, all the same. Imperial over-reach, created by attempts to enforce the Continental Blockade after 1806, the disaster of the Russian campaign of 1812, and Napoleon's subsequent inability to reach a negotiated peace with all or several of the allied powers, all threatened the existence of the empire, and eventually destroyed it.

Diplomatic and military factors were the most obvious sources of fear for the bureaucracy. Some felt the strain of international conflict and internal revolt directly. On the convulsed Catalan frontier, the young intendant Vieffville was driven from his chef lieu by guerrillas more than once, and suffered a nervous breakdown in the summer of 1812.⁵⁷ His colleague in Parma, Nardon, who often spent months in the saddle patrolling his difficult department, suffered from migraines, haemorrhoids, and stomach problems that required a period of recovery in Switzerland.⁵⁸ For those in more peaceful postings, »mal du pays« – homesickness – together with complaints about the climate and the absence of family, all compounded by very rare leave, abound in letters to their superiors.⁵⁹ Stranded far from home and beset by armed rebellion, they were overpowered by stress just as much as they found it inevitable. Yet, these were not the true nightmares of ›les impériaux‹.

Well before the international situation turned against Napoleon, ›les impériaux‹ carried with them deeper fears, embedded in Enlightenment culture and their sense of the European past – fears that took the form of psychological disquiet. Perhaps the greatest source of stress on the imperial bureaucracy – the accumulation of all the individual sources of stress, both internal and external – was the fear of failure. These anxieties had two distinct sources in their minds, in the context of the annexed territories. One was the burden of the Roman

past. The paradigm of Rome powerfully influenced the French imperial enterprise, but under stress, the French also never forgot that Rome had fallen.

The second source of anxiety was rooted in the environmental determinism of a strand of Enlightenment thinking most associated with Montesquieu, which held that attempts to export the institutions and values of a state created in one geographic environment beyond its natural limits were futile.

Almost perversely, the imperialists' anxiety, however it was generated, stemmed from their self-belief, and in that of France, as ›la grande nation‹. The combination of a strong sense of French cultural superiority and the clarity of their mission to impose le modèle inébranable on the annexed territories threw their ultimate objective, and the question of success or failure, into very sharp relief. Theirs was an imperialist mission to civilise the non-French parts of their empire in very strict, precise terms. In times of hubris, they turned to the historical example of Rome at its height.

*It was something in Europe, to be a Frenchman [...] I was, in Germany, what the Roman pro-consuls had been, once upon a time [...] and I can still recall that sort of drunkenness I felt crossing the Rhine.*⁶⁰

Hubris was seldom long-lived, however. Their sense of being on a mission, pursued as aggressively as the enforcement of conscription, created the added pressures of ›culture wars‹ to all the other sources of conflict and external stress with their administrés.

This sharpened their own self-image as imperialists, but this was not what really raised doubts in their minds. Rather, their deep fears came from a growing awareness that they now found themselves in places where what they had assumed was a universally applicable model simply was not the case. This was imperial over-reach of a cultural kind; it whispered to them that certain societies might not be capable of becoming French. Was Aristotle right, after all? Was the Napoleonic hegemony really a polis, surrounded by irreducible barbarians? A young French administrator in what is now Croatia came to see murder as simply ›an inveterate habit, the result of the ancient barbarism of the populace of the countryside.‹⁶¹ In adversity, the French imperialists who knew their history often felt themselves stalked

by the historical precedent of the ultimate failure of the Romans in the imperial venture they believed most akin to their own.

Not surprisingly, this was felt most acutely in Italy, especially in Rome itself, where the reminders of Ancient Roman grandeur were interpreted by the French in a negative, rather than an inspirational, light. The ruins of the imperial past did not arouse a sense of glory in them; the Capitol and the Forum did not inspire the French or fill them with confidence. On the contrary, they saw the ruins as a stark reminder that Rome had fallen; the Baroque culture that now engulfed the Classical past exposed how far the Roman imperial dream had fallen. Camille de Tournon was made prefect of the new department of Rome on its creation in 1809.⁶² The beneficiary of a traditional classical education, these are his thoughts as he surveyed his *chef lieu*:

*It is one of those sights that touches the soul more than the eyes. Spread out beneath one's feet is a country that was for so long the master of all the others...and yet now, its ruins are everywhere! The soul is crushed by the weight of the idea. It is the same earth, the same sky; only man has changed! It is a long way from the temple of Jupiter, which dominated the Eternal City, to the humble hospice of the Passionists! Where conquerors bore home their exotic spoils there, now beggars offer alms to wretches even poorer than themselves, the Mendicant friars!*⁶³

Rome had not merely fallen to barbarians; the once-noble Romans had, themselves, fallen. Tournon found it impossible to come to any other conclusion, for the evidence was all around him.

Many among the French concluded that the Catholic religion was the real author of Rome's demise, not the Gothic hordes. The Church – as Tournon, a practicing Catholic, saw all too well – was still all around. Its continuing influence threatened to erode their imperium as it had Rome's, and it was still at work. ›It is all about bread and priestly conniving‹, was the verdict of the French chief of police in Rome.⁶⁴ The power of the Church became more than a component of counter-revolution in this analysis, but a pernicious agent of degeneration that had long ago proved its power to

erode the spirit of imperial confidence. Every time the clergy preached against conscription, or refused to sing *Te Deum* for imperial victories, or simply defied the regime – whether over the high policy of Episcopal appointments, or over the everyday matter of observing banned holidays – the French imperialists felt themselves engaged in more than institutional power struggles, stressful as those were. They looked over their collective shoulder at the enlightenment's vision of a fallen Rome, and shuddered. There was something much deeper at stake that raised the rift between Napoleon and Pius VII above even the level of the mediaeval clashes between popes and Holy Roman Emperors. Napoleon and Pius both knew this. As Ambrogio Caiani has put it, »Napoleon wanted to refashion the Catholic Church into a state subservient cult that promoted imperial and enlightened values.« Pius saw clearly what was at stake and resisted him, regarding »theocratic government as unrenounceable.«⁶⁵ His men on the ground felt the need for Napoleon to win this battle.

The greatest imperialists known to Europe, the exemplars of *grandeur*, had themselves failed and gone on failing unto the present day. It was a sobering thought to those who consciously proclaimed themselves to be their heirs. The shadow of Rome was a haunting, rather than a confrontation, but it nagged at the psyche nonetheless.

Conclusion

More than the spectre of Ancient Rome, however, the French felt the verdict of Montesquieu hanging over them – that imperial enterprises were doomed to fail by their very nature, that it was unnatural for states to seek to rule regions with different climates and topographies to their own, so powerful an influence was geography on the shaping of societies. As Sankar Muthu has emphasised, »Montesquieu was by far the most influential proponent of climatological social analysis.«⁶⁶ It was Montesquieu's considered opinion that climate and geography would absorb and change the imperialists, themselves, over time, and that attempting to export le modèle inébranable beyond its original homeland was futile: the natural environment was stronger than any laws or institutions humans could

devise, and extreme climactic conditions, whether hot or cold, would erode civilisation.

Montesquieu was quite clear that the example of the Romans proved exactly this point. For him, it was not the spiritual or cultural power of Catholicism that had eroded Roman greatness, but climate – and that was eternal, still there to thwart the Napoleonic empire. Despite all the imperialists' efforts to cultivate civic and martial virtue, the meridional climate eventually lulled them into soft living.⁶⁷ His dictums rang loud in French ears. Nardon, in Parma, echoed Montesquieu's determinism when he called his department »this country, where nature makes idle hands«.⁶⁸ The men Aurélien Lignereux has called collectively »les impériaux« did not attempt to internalise or disguise the fear of failure that geographic determinism stirred in them.

In the face of so many challenges, and so many and varied sources of stress, the imperial bureaucracy proved remarkably resilient. It had become more youthful and professional as the Napoleonic period progressed, and seldom disintegrated in the face of military collapse in the last years of the empire. Its structures and personnel, for all their inherent flaws and intense external pressures, proved able to maintain a semblance of orderly administration until ordered to cease their functions and evacuate their posts either by Napoleon or the allies.

The French imperialists had their antidote for this kind of stress, in that they fought philosophe with philosophe. Where Montesquieu expounded a deterministic, pessimistic vision of imperialism, Voltaire, Buffon and others believed firmly that »good government«, a determined human effort under the aegis of an enlightened state, could overcome the natural obstacles of geography and climate. The tides of history could be reversed. This strand of Enlightenment thinking on imperialism has been explored in the seminal work of Michèle Duchet⁶⁹ and is considered by Sankar Muthu to be the dominant current among the French philosophes and successive 19th-century opinion shapers.⁷⁰ Ultimately, this seems to have proved true among »les impériaux«, an indication that they represented the first wave of a new phase of imperialism. There was a constant refrain from their ranks that good government – the application of le

modèle inébranable – would reverse the degeneracy they believed surrounded them. Nevertheless, the lived experience of the Napoleonic imperial bureaucracy was one of a system coping with constant stress and real crises, more than of a regime secure in its routines.

- 1 Stuart Woolf: *Napoleon's Integration of Europe*, London 1991.
- 2 From the enormous quantity of this kind: Michael Broers: *Napoleonic Imperialism and the Savoyard Monarchy 1773–1821*. State building in Piedmont, Lampeter 1997; Michael Broers: *The Napoleonic Empire in Italy 1796–1814*. Cultural imperialism in a European context?, Basingstoke 2005; Michael Rowe: *From Reich to Nation. The Rhineland in the Revolutionary Age, 1780–1830*, Cambridge 2003; Marijn van der Burg: *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*. Conquest, Incorporation, and Integration, Cham 2021; Juan Mercader Riba: *Catalunya e l'Imperi napoleonic*, Monserrat 1978; Carla Nardi: *Napoleone e Roma*. La politica della Consulta romana, Rome 1989.
- 3 The term as quoted in the headline was given general currency by Marc Raeff: *The Well Ordered Police State*. Social and institutional change through the Germanies and Russia, 1600–1800, London 1983.
- 4 There are notable exceptions to this. Charles Durand: *Les auditeurs au conseil d'État sous le Consulat et le Premier Empire*, Aix-en-Provence 1958; and Edward A. Whitcomb: *Napoleon's Prefects*, in: *American Historical Review* 79 (1974), pp. 1089–1118 are all important studies that pre-date the post-Woolf change in historiographical direction.
- 5 On the high politics: Isser Woloch: *Napoleon and his Collaborators*. The Making of a Dictatorship, New York 2001. For this process at local level within France: Howard G. Brown: *Ending the French Revolution*. Violence, Justice and Repression from the Terror to Napoleon, London 2006.
- 6 On the edifice of the new state: Michael Rowe: *Administration*. Police and Governance, in: Michael Broers / Philip Dwyer (eds.): *The Cambridge History of the Napoleonic Wars*, Vol. 1: *Politics and Diplomacy*, Cambridge 2022, pp. 188–207.
- 7 Recent local studies that reflect new preoccupations with the interaction of imperial ideology of local officials and native populations who needed to navigate the new regime include: van der Burg: *Napoleonic Governance*, and Doina Pasca Harsanyi: *French Rule in the States of Parma, 1796–1814*. Working with Napoleon, Cham 2022.
- 8 Thierry Lentz: *Nouvelle Histoire du Premier Empire*, Vol. I: *Napoléon et la conquête de l'Europe, 1804–1811*, Paris 2002, pp. 56–102.
- 9 The role of utility in Napoleonic justifications of authority within the framework laid out by Max Weber is explored in Michael Broers: *L'impero napoleonico fra modello e mito*, in: Brigitte Mazohl / Paolo Pombeni (eds.): *Minoranze negli imperi*. Popoli fra identità nazionale e ideologia imperial, Bologna 2012, pp. 35–58.
- 10 Among the most prominent: Jane Burbank / Frederick Cooper: *Empires in World History*. Power and the Politics of Difference, Princeton 2010; and the more specialised collection of essays in Peter Crooks / Timothy H. Parsons (eds.): *Empires and Bureaucracy in World History*. From Late Antiquity to the Twentieth Century, Cambridge 2016; Stefan Berger / Alexei Miller (eds.): *Nationalizing Empires*, Budapest 2015.
- 11 For a closely researched overview: Aurélien Lignereux: *L'Empire des Français, 1799–1815*, Paris 2012.
- 12 Aurélien Lignereux: *Les Impériaux*. Administrer et habiter l'Europe de Napoléon, Paris 2019. Aurélien Lignereux: *L'Empire des Français, 1799–1815*, Paris 2012.
- 13 For a local study that reflects how the administration was supposed to work, relatively normally: Gavin Daly: *Inside Napoleonic France*. State and Society in Rouen, 1800–1815, Aldershot 2001.
- 14 The collection of essays in: Berger / Miller (eds.): *Nationalizing Empires*. This volume is devoted specifically to this theme. On the Napoleonic Empire: Michael Broers: *The First Napoleonic Empire, 1799–1814*, in: Stefan Berger / Alexei Miller (eds.): *Nationalizing Empires*, Budapest 2015, pp. 99–134.
- 15 For an overview, Aurélien Lignereux: *Servir Napoléon*. Policiers et gendarmes dans les départements annexés (1796–1814), Seyssel 2012. For local studies, Brown: *Ending the French Revolution*; Broers: *Napoleonic Imperialism and the Savoyard Monarchy*, on northern Italy; Ute Planert: *Mythos vom Befreiungskrieg*. Frankreich Kriege und der deutsche Süden, 1792–1814, Paderborn 2007.
- 16 For a succinct appraisal of this process: Isser Woloch: *The Napoleonic Regime and French Society*, in: Philip G. Dwyer (ed.): *Napoleon and Europe*, London 2001, pp. 60–78.
- 17 For the classic analysis of these concepts: Frédéric Bluche: *Le Bonapartisme*. Aux origines de la droite autoritaire, 1800–1850, Paris 1980, pp. 47–66. For local case studies of Ralliement and Amalgam's application: Geoffrey Ellis: *Rhine and Loire*. Napoleonic elites and social order, in: Gwynne Lewis / Colin Lucas (eds.): *Beyond the Terror*, Cambridge 1983, pp. 167–189.
- 18 The now classic expression of this is Paul W. Schroeder: *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848*, Oxford 1994. Similar views frame the argument of Charles J. Esdaile: *The Wars of Napoleon*, Basingstoke 1995.
- 19 Michael Broers: *Policing the Empire*. Napoleon and the Pacification of Europe, in: Philip G. Dwyer (ed.): *Napoleon and Europe*, London 2001, pp. 153–168.
- 20 Michael Broers: *A Turner thesis for Europe? The frontier in Napoleonic Europe*, in: *Rivista Europea di Studi Napoleonici e dell'Età delle Restaurazioni* 2, Naples 2021, pp. 3–13.
- 21 On the Franco-Spanish border: Michel Brunet: *Le Roussillon: Une société contre l'État, 1780–1820*, Toulouse 1986. On the Rhineland: T.C.W. Blanning: *The French Revolution in Germany: Occupation and Resistance in the Rhineland, 1792–1802*, Oxford 1983. On Piedmont: Michele Ruggiero: *La Rivolta dei Contadini Piemontesi*, Turin 1974. On Belgium: Paul Verhaegen: *La Belgique sous la domination française, 1792–1814*, 5 vol., Brussels 1923–1929.
- 22 On the background in Catalonia: Pierre Vilar: *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne moderne*, vol. 2: *Recherches sur les Fondements Économiques des structures Nationales*, Paris 1962, pp. 561–584. On Piedmont: Ruggiero, *La Rivolta*. On Navarre: John Lawrence Tone: *The Fatal Knot: The Guerrilla War in Navarre and the Defeat of Napoleon in Spain*, Chapel Hill 1994, pp. 42–58.
- 23 For overviews of the process: Michael Broers: *Napoleon's Other War: Bandits, Rebels and their Pursuers in the Age of Revolutions*, Long Hanborough 2010. Charles J. Esdaile: *Popular Resistance to the Napoleonic Empire*, in: Philip G. Dwyer (ed.): *Napoleon and Europe*, London 2001, pp. 136–154.
- 24 This process is traced in: Michael Broers: *Europe Under Napoleon, 1799–1814*, London 1996, pp. 24–98.
- 25 Juan Mercader Riba: *Puigcerdà, capital del departament del Segre*, Barcelona 1971, pp. 18–24.
- 26 Archivio di Stato dei Cuneo, Mazzo 177, fascicolo 1802, Girodi, judge of Demonte, to Prefect, dept. Stura, 29 germinal, year xi/8. 5. 1803.
- 27 Broers: *Napoleonic Imperialism and the Savoyard Monarchy*, p. 309.
- 28 Archives Nationales de Paris [ANP] BB 5 261 (Organisation judiciaire, Rhin) S. Prefect, Simmern, to Minister of Justice, 29 fructidor, year x.
- 29 ANP BB 5 261 (Organisation judiciaire, Rhin) Magistrat de Sûreté, Simmern, to Minister of Justice, 1. 9. 1809.
- 30 Isser Woloch: *The New Regime*. Transformations of the French Civic Order, 1789–1820s, New York 1994, p. 392.
- 31 The classic studies of conscription are: Alan Forrest: *Conscripts and Deserters*. The French army and society during the Revolution and

- Empire, Oxford 1989; Isser Woloch: Napoleonic conscription. State power and civil society, in: *Past & Present* 111 (1986), pp. 75–97.
- 32 On the major urban revolts that rocked the Netherlands: Johann Joor: Resistance against Napoleon in the Kingdom of Holland, in: Michael Broers / Peter Hicks / Agustín Guimerá (eds.): *The Napoleonic Empire and the New European Political Culture*, Basingstoke 2012, pp. 112–122. A mass uprising in Rotterdam, in conjunction with the advance of the allied armies, actually did help facilitate the collapse of French rule in the region in 1813.
- 33 For a granular study of this: Sylvie Humbert-Convain: *Le juge de apix et la repression des infractions douanières en Flandre et en Hollande, 1794–1815. Contribution à l'histoire du Système Continental Napoléonien*, Lille 1993. Aurélien Lignereux has calculated that exactly 100 per cent of the Directors of Customs in the annexed departments were French across the entire period of Napoleonic rule, and 74 per cent of the Directors of the *Droits Réunis*. Aurélien Lignereux: *Les Impériaux. Administrer et Habiter l'Europe de Napoléon*, Paris 2019, p. 81f.
- 34 Martijn van der Burg notes that 74 per cent of sub-prefects in the three Hanseatic departments were from »the Interior« (17 out of 24): Van der Burg: *Napoleonic Governance*, p. 136.
- 35 Michael Broers: *The Politics of Religion in Napoleonic Italy. The War Against Good, 1801–1814*, Abingdon 2002, pp. 146–174.
- 36 ANP BB 5 268 (Organisation judiciaire, depts. hanséatiques) Faure to Minister of Justice, 26. 1. 1811.
- 37 ANP BB 5 268 (Organisation judiciaire, depts. hanséatiques) Faure to Minister of Justice, 26. 1. 1811.
- 38 Cited in Broers: *Napoleonic Empire in Italy*, p. 247.
- 39 Michael Broers: *The Napoleonic Mediterranean. Enlightenment, Revolution and Empire*, London 2017, pp. 178–180, 195.
- 40 For a statistical analysis: Lignereux: *Les Impériaux*, pp. 72–82.
- 41 Initially, a partial exception to this rule was made in the Dutch departments following their annexation in 1810, where several Dutch prefects were appointed alongside Frenchmen. However, by 1812, all prefectural appointments were French, as were those in the three newly annexed Hanseatic departments that followed the annexation of the kingdom of Holland. Van der Burg: *Napoleonic Governance*, pp. 101–122. On Rhinelanders' resentment of this policy, and their own reluctance to serve outside their region, see Michel Rowe: *From Reich to State. The Rhineland in the Revolutionary Age, 1780–1830*, Cambridge 2003, pp. 91, 94.
- 42 Cited in Broers: *Napoleonic Empire in Italy*, p. 185.
- 43 Cited in Simon Schama: *Patriots and Liberators. Revolution in the Netherlands, 1780–1813*, New York 1977, p. 621.
- 44 In an Italian context: Broers: *Napoleonic Empire in Italy*, pp. 175–212.
- 45 Van der Burg: *Napoleonic Governance*, pp. 128–138.
- 46 These problems are set out carefully in the overview in Lignereux: *Les Impériaux*, pp. 139–195. For a large quantity of letters of refusal of posts in the Hanseatic departments that usually offered promotion to already senior French magistrates: ANP BB5 268 (Organisation judiciaire, départements hanséatiques). Health, family circumstances and lack of knowledge of the local language were the most frequently cited reasons for refusal.
- 47 This overlap of authority was particularly marked in the Catalan departments — the heritage of Habsburg rule, where not only were judicial and administrative functions fused at the lowest local level in the offices of *alcade* (mayor) and *battle* (judge), but also at provincial level in the office of *corregidor*, in the highest provincial body the *Audiencia*. Broers: *Napoleonic Mediterranean*, pp. 171–174. On the former Austrian parts of the Illyrian departments: Broers: *Napoleonic Mediterranean*, pp. 201–204.
- 48 Cited in Broers: *Napoleonic Mediterranean*, p. 202.
- 49 Rowe: *From Reich to State*, pp. 102f.
- 50 Cited in Broers: *Napoleonic Empire in Italy*, p. 81.
- 51 Broers: *Napoleonic Empire in Italy*, pp. 193–194.
- 52 Thierry Lentz: *Nouvelle Histoire du Premier Empire*, vol. 3: *La France et l'Europe de Napoléon, 1804–1814*, Paris 2007, p. 184.
- 53 ANP BB5 268 (Organisation judiciaire, départements hanséatiques) President, Cour Impériale, Hamburg, to Minister of Justice, 26. 8. 1811.
- 54 Cited in Broers: *Napoleonic Empire in Italy*, p. 156.
- 55 Cited in Broers: *Napoleonic Empire in Italy*, p. 156.
- 56 Schroeder: *Transformation*, p. 441.
- 57 Broers: *Napoleonic Mediterranean*, pp. 168–171.
- 58 Broers: *Napoleonic Empire in Italy*, p. 261.
- 59 For an overview, Lignereux, *Les impériaux*, pp. 189–195.
- 60 Jacques-Claude Beugnot: *Le Grand-Duché de Berg* (Extrait des Mémoires inédits du Comte Beugnot), Paris 1852, p. 18.
- 61 Cited in Broers: *Napoleonic Mediterranean*, p. 209.
- 62 Lignereux: *Les impériaux*, pp. 36f.
- 63 Tournon to his mother, 3. 9. 1810, in: Jacques Moulard (ed.): *Lettres inédites du comte Camille de Tournon, préfet de Rome*, vol. 1: *La politique et l'esprit public, 1809–1814*, Paris 1914.
- 64 Cited in Broers: *Politics of Religion*, p. 60.
- 65 Ambrogio A. Caiani: *To Kidnap a Pope. Napoleon and Pius VII*, New Haven 2021, p. 289.
- 66 Sankar Muthu: *Enlightenment Against Empire*, Princeton 2003, p. 37.
- 67 This is the constant theme of his *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des romains et de leur decadence*, first published in 1727.
- 68 Cited in Broers: *Napoleonic Mediterranean*, p. 235.
- 69 Michèle Duchet: *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières*, Paris 1971, Michèle Duchet: *Diderot et l'histoire des Deux Indes ou l'écriture fragmentaire*, Paris 1978.
- 70 Muthu: *Enlightenment*, pp. 4–6.

Abstract

The Napoleonic episode in European history was a perpetual crisis of war and dislocation, a prolonged exercise in stress across European society which engulfed the conquered populations of the empire and the bureaucracy set to rule over them. The Napoleonic bureaucracy is increasingly evaluated in terms of an imperial bureaucracy. Bureaucracy stood at the heart of the Napoleonic state. Historians' attention has inevitably been drawn to the inter-action of French and non-French administrators, and to the impact of specific Napoleonic policies and practices on the non-French subjects of the empire, in which stress was intrinsic, and so an essential conceptual tool.

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