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Thierry Lentz, Ed., *Napoléon et l'Europe. Regards sur une politique.* Paris: Fayard, 2005. 445 pp. €25.00. ISBN 2-213-6239-02.

Review by David P. Jordan, University of Illinois, Chicago.

For years publishers were uninterested in the acts of colloquia; if the papers were not elsewhere published, useful and interesting research fell through the cracks. In recent years, for reasons that must have to do with the business of publishing, we have had a number of these collective enterprises, and the renewed interest in Napoleon beyond France and beyond the battlefields has benefited.

In addition to being a record of the colloquia they memorialize these volumes provide a useful snap shot of the state of scholarship. *Napoléon et l'Europe* contains papers given at a colloquium organized by the Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères and the Fondation Napoléon on the 18 and 19 November 2004. No less a personage than Dominique de Villepin, then at the quai d'Orsay, played an important role in determining the deliberately imprecise topic, which would allow for a broad range of papers: "Regards sur la politique européenne de Napoléon." This was a francophone colloquium and the twenty-nine participants considered Napoleon's politique extérieure in the broadest possible perspective.

The justly familiar names are here: Thierry Lentz (the coordinator of the colloquium); Jean-Paul Bertaud (one of the grand old men of Napoleonic studies); Jacques-Olivier Boudon (the author of several books on Napoleon); Annie Jourdan (who reinvigorated and redirected the cultural history of the age); Henry Laurens (both a military historian and an Arabist); Natalie Petiteau (who has traced the Napoleonic veterans after 1815 and written on historiography); and the economic historian Lucien Bély, to mention only a few. In addition there are some new names, several of them not professional historians and not specialists in Napoleonic Europe. Indeed, it is this aspect, historians not professionally in the main stream of Napoleonic studies, along with the scope and quality of the papers here gathered that makes this volume welcome.

Annie Jourdan, to begin with, has written on the Revolution and Napoleon, most notably her *Napoléon, héros, imperator, mécène* (1998) from the traditional vantage point of France. For the colloquium she presented "Napoléon et les élites patriotes bataves: un même combat?" It is an inspired choice of subject. She teaches in Dutch at the University of Amsterdam, knows the language and the literature, and brings to the Napoleonic invasion of Holland none of the nationalistic passion of many Dutch historians. She carefully disentangles the skein of the Batavian revolution, arguing that William I found his power enhanced once Napoleon had modernized his kingdom, and he retained all the imposed fiscal, legal, and economic reforms, while carefully not returning any power to the old elites. In brief, Napoleonic accomplished much that the Batavian revolution was unable to achieve. The same paradox of Napoleon's work re-enforcing the *ancien régime* while attempting to destroy it appears in some of the German princedoms as well. The old elites discovered they could use Napoleonic efficiency to entrench more deeply their reactionary power.

Xavier Abeberry Magescas, whose affiliation or specialty is not given, takes a similar tack for Spain. Joseph's reign has traditionally been seen as precariously balanced on a social pyramid and, once England intervened and the popular uprisings began, could only end in catastrophe. Magescas argues that Joseph was an unexpected revolutionary rather than an ineffectual, artificial king. He "initiated the transition (1808-1834) that allowed Spain to pass from the institutions of the ancien régime to those of a

liberal, modern state.” Napoleon, who railed against his older brother’s ineptitudes inadvertently “contributed to the replacement of the age of privilege by the age of law”. (p. 224)

There are several such examples of what we might call the law of unintended consequences. This thesis, nowhere explicitly stated, is, to my mind, the dominant theme that emerges from the papers, inadvertently I might add. Pierre Branda’s “La guerre a-t-elle payé la guerre?” analyzes a classic Napoleonic dictum: “You must have as a principle that war must nourish war,” he told Marshal Soult when he appointed him *général en chef* of the Army of the South in Spain (14 July 1810). The irony is that Soult was a notorious looter and war in Spain paid handsomely for the Marshal but not for itself. This aside, Branda goes on to argue – with very useful tables (pp. 265, 268-9, 271) detailing the income and cost of the annexed territories, the amounts collected by France, and the daily cost of maintaining a French soldier for a year—that Napoleonic war did not pay for itself. But, he argues, the war had to be paid for somehow, and here he finds the true significance of Napoleon’s financial reforms. Despite the enormous sums needed “the French Empire did not set in motion any public bankruptcy, as did the preceding regimes, from Louis XIV to the Directory.” In addition Napoleon’s “implantation of the French fiscal model in the four corners of Europe marked the beginning of a modern understanding of public finance.” The political price he paid for extracting enormous sums from his enemies was as high as that of conscription, but in the long run Napoleon prepared the ground for a new kind of war which mobilized the state and its citizens, (p. 273) alas, for murderous purposes.

Silvia Marzagalli makes a similar argument in “Le Blocus continental pouvait-il réussir?” Not only did wide-spread corruption cripple the blockade—Bourrienne got rich in Hambourg by certifying the legitimate provenance of cargos when he had no idea of their place of origin—and smuggling increased dramatically between 1806 and 1813; but the blockade, even assuming an efficiency it did not have, would only have effected two-fifths of England’s exports, and even for those products dependant upon European ports and markets the blockade did not “paralyze Britain’s commerce or navigation” (p. 107). It might even be argued that the Blockade enhanced England’s non-European trade and thus bears some responsibility for her second phase of imperialism.

Napoleon’s laws had similar collateral effects unforeseen by the conqueror, argues Clémence Zacharie-Tchakarian (“Le Code civil, instrument de l’unification de l’Empire?”, whose appraisal of the impact of the Civil Code on Europe reveals this same pattern of unintended consequences. The Code did not unite the Empire in any significant way, not least because there were so few jurists who could run the new machinery; but it did institute “an enlarged view of property” that made it a matter of law and thus supported “the abolition of feudalism” which “is the “privileged conduit of revolutionary ideology” (p. 187).

In all these examples, and there are several more in this collection, the unstated thesis is that Napoleon instigated or accelerated revolutionary change that could not have been achieved by the *ancien régime* kingdoms he overran. He believed he was imposing order and uniformity, but in fact he helped perpetuate the grip of the old elites.

Among the other essays in the collection are several hors d’œuvre that are worth tasting. Thierry Lentz writes on “Napoléon et Charlemagne,” and, in the spirit of Robert Morrissey’s *L’Empereur à la barbe fleurie: Charlemagne dans la mythologie et l’histoire de France* (Gallimard: Paris, 1997), argues convincingly that Charlemagne was Napoleon’s model for his empire. Lucien Bély (“Napoléon, juge de Louis XIV”) does much the same thing for the Sun King. His observation that the Emperor defended his secret police by referring to Louis XIV’s secret political policing of his subjects (p. 34) is a curious evocation of the French past, especially for a child of the Revolution.

The third variety of essay includes those that take up some familiar, classic topic of Napoleon's relationship to Europe. Jean-Pierre Bois writes on the rupture of the European equilibrium. Andrzej Nieuwazny lays out Poland's tragic destiny. They had no one else to turn to except Napoleon, and he bled the volunteers and conscripted soldiers without hesitation or remorse, giving Poland little in return but a small duchy, soon destroyed by Russia. There is also Emmanuel de Waresquiel's nice essay on Talleyrand, Yves Bruley on Napoleon's personal diplomacy, and Jean-Paul Bertaud on the relationship between the army and Napoleon's foreign policy.

The essay by Marie-Pierre Rey ("Le Projet européen d'Alexandre Ier") is one of the papers delivered by a scholar who is not a Napoleon specialist, but a Russian expert. The account of Alexander's decision to oppose Napoleon--as a result of the kidnapping and execution of the duc d'Enghien (p. 295)--is viewed from the Russian perspective and offers us another way of seeing familiar Napoleonic events. The essay on Napoleon and Northern Europe by Eric Lerdrup-Bourgois analyzes a neglected corner of Napoleonic Europe, while Henry Laurens, the master of the subject, writes of Napoleon's impact on the Arab world.

Any description and analysis of a collection of essays such as this one runs the risk of presenting a smorgasbord to the reader. Some of the difficulty is intrinsic to the nature of colloquia. What I would emphasize is that these essays reinforce the growing interest of historians in Napoleon outside of France, Napoleon as ruler of states and founder of artificial states, and the dense and knotted intertwining of Napoleon at home, at war, and abroad. Napoleon the warrior is perhaps receding into the background, or rather left to those who are strictly military historians. The time is ripe for a thorough-going reappraisal of Napoleon, and this colloquium is a step in the direction indicated by Stuart Woolf (*Napoleon's Integration of Europe*, Routledge: London, 1991) and Michael Broers (*Europe Under Napoleon, 1799-1815*. Arnold: London, 1996) and continued by Philip Dwyer's edited volume (*Napoleon and Europe* Longman: London, 2001) as well as Jean-Paul Bertaud, Alan Forrest, and Annie Jourdan's *Napoléon, le monde et les Anglais*. Autremont: Paris, 2004).

I wouldn't recommend reading *Napoléon et l'Europe* straight through, but rather treating it as a collective enterprise with no single point of view, whose individual essays can (and should be) read to have this or that topic illuminated.

LIST OF ESSAYS

- Thierry Lentz, "Napoléon et Charlemagne"
- Lucien Bély, "Napoléon juge de Louis XIV"
- Jean-Christianb Petitfils, "La politique française d'équilibre européen à la fin de l'Ancien Régime"
- Jean-Pierre Bois, "La rupture de l'équilibre européen par la Révolution française"
- Jacques-Olivier Boudon, "L'Europe en 1800"
- Andrezej Nieuwazny, "Le dilemme polonaise de Napoléon: des légionnaires aux 'Varsoviens'"
- Silvia Mazagalli, "Le Blocus continental pouvait-il réussir?"
- Natalie Petiteau, "Napoléon et la paix: mythes et realities"
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- Mireille Musso, "Caulaincourt ambassadeur en Russie et la réalité de l'alliance franco-russe"
- Yves Bruley, "Le personnel diplomatique napoléonien"
- Jean-Paul Bertaud, "L'armée au service de la politique extérieure de Napoléon"
- Clémence Zacharie-Tchakarian, "Le Code civil, instrument de l'unification de l'Empire?"
- Xavier Abeberry Magescas, "Les rallies et les convertis: elites et notables européens au service du Grand Empire. L'exemple de l'Espagne"

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- Annie Jourdan, "Napoléon et les elites patriots bataves: un même combat?"
 - Pierre Branda, "La guerre a-t-elle payé la guerre?"
 - Peter Hicks, "Regard sur la politique étrangère de la Grande-Bretagne, 1806-1815"
 - Marie-Pierre Rey, "Le projet européen d'Alexander Ier"
 - Luigi Mascilli Migliorini, "L'Italie dans le système napoléonien" Jean-Paul Bled, "Metternich et l'alliance franco-autrichienne"
 - Michael Kerautret, "Les Allemagnes napoléoniennes"
 - Eric Lerdrup-Bourgeois, "Napoléon et le Nord. Le Danemark-Norvège et la Suède dans la politique extérieure française, 1799-1814"
 - Steven Englund, "Un regard américain"
 - Henry Laurens, "Napoléon, l'Europe et le monde arabe"
 - Jacques-Alain Sédoux, "Le congrès de Vienne et la fin de l'Europe napoléonienne"
 - Laurent Theis, "L'héritage empoisonnant. Guizot et Thiers juges de Napoléon"
 - Georges-Henri Soutou, "L'héritage sous benefice d'inventaire? La politique extérieure de Napoléon III"
 - Alain Larcen, "Napoléon jugé par le general de Gaulle"
 - Jean Tulard, "Les politiques européennes de Napoléon"

David P. Jordan
University of Illinois, Chicago
dpj@uic.edu

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