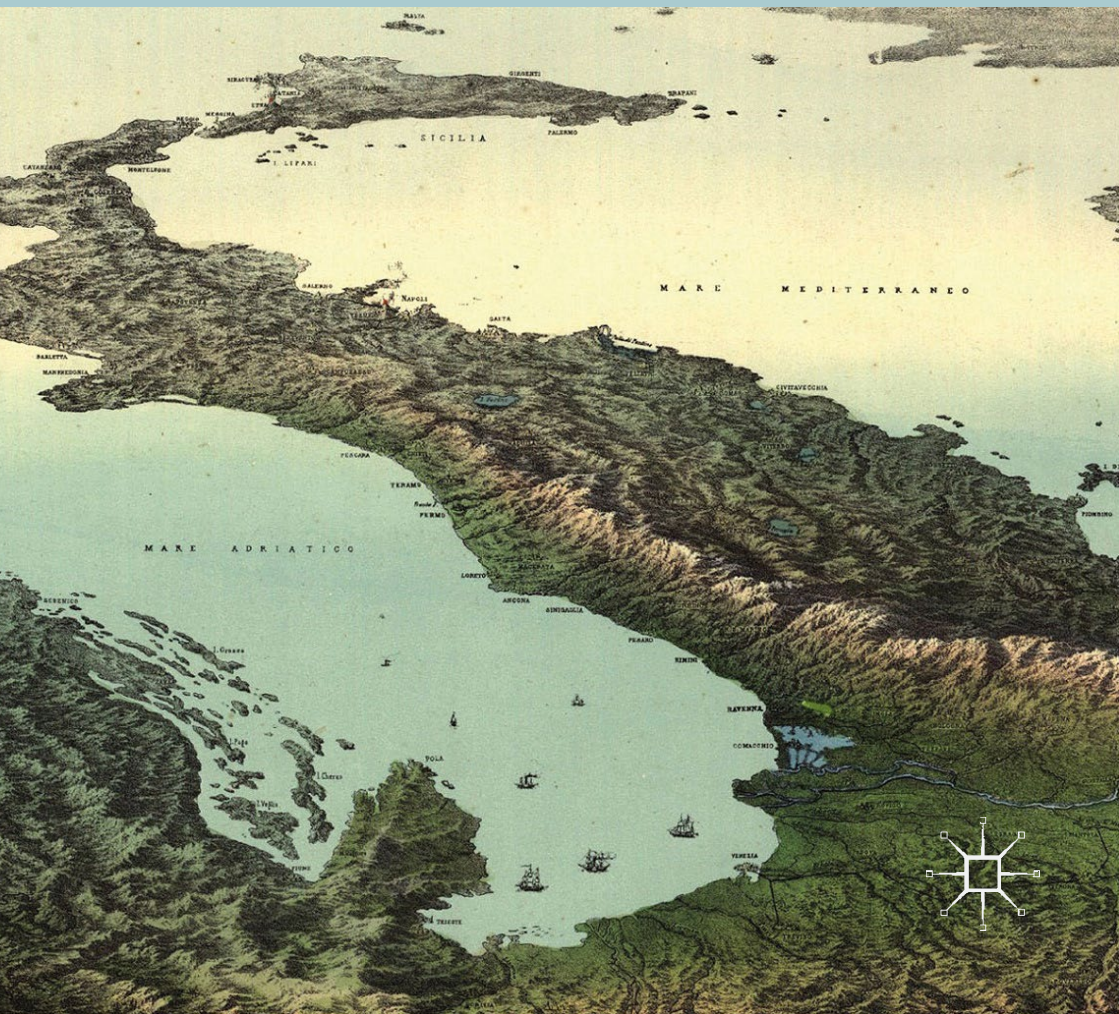
France, Britain, and the Struggle for the Revolutionary Western Mediterranean

Joshua Meeks

War, Culture and Society, 1750–1850



War, Culture and Society, 1750–1850

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To Jamie, my amazing wife. Not a single word would have been written without you.

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Contents

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In January of 1794, a British convoy full of Toulonese refugees arrived at the Tuscan port of Livorno. These citizens of Toulon had invited the British to act as custodians of their city three months earlier, but the besieging forces of the Revolutionary Army quickly evicted the British, their allies, and the Federalist Toulonese. The Tuscan government had only recently and reluctantly allied to the British cause against the French Revolution and had not taken part in the occupation of Toulon. Now they flatly refused entry to the refugees. The best efforts of British Minister Plenipotentiary John Hervey and British Admiral Samuel Hood resulted in an agreement to land the refugees on the small island of Porto Ferraio, but only for a short period. Unfortunately, Porto Ferraio could hold only roughly 1000 refugees and the number under British care had risen well past 5000.

Frantically the British asked for assistance from their First Coalition allies, all the while shuffling sick and wounded around the island and ships. These allies had left unceremoniously after the debacle at Toulon, with most only taking responsibility for a small number of refugees. The Neapolitans refused all aid, as did the Sardinians. The Spanish, far from assisting, actually brought 200 additional Toulonese to Livorno. Despite the Tuscan authorities denying permission to disembark, the Spanish dropped them off and sailed away. Eventually, the Piedmontese and Austrians agreed to grant asylum to several hundred of the refugees, while others formed into

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an *émigré* corps. Some of the refugees took their chances, returning to Revolutionary France where they were predictably met with a welcome as traitors. A few actually made their way to Britain where they lived off the generosity of the government. This drain on the already strained British resources continued until the government declared that the refugees either must find employment —likely on merchant ships, as they were not trusted on navy ships—or become prisoners of war. Many of the rest made their way to Corsica, which by the middle of 1794 had become the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom.[1]

This struggle for consensus and cooperation is typical of international politics during the Revolutionary period in the Western Mediterranean. In London and Paris the respective governments set themselves at opposite ends of the political spectrum, but the practical application of their political goals took place in the negotiable spaces, such as Toulon or Tuscany, away from the centers of power.[2] In the Western Mediterranean, representatives from both Great Powers attempted to navigate an arena where local forces actively adapted Revolution and Counter-Revolution to fit their goals, whether that was neutrality, autonomy, or commercial gain.

The process of adaptation shaped and was shaped by the desires and objectives of the French and British, but not without both internal and external conflict. The result was not an affirmation of the tenants of radical Revolutionary diplomacy, nor was it a return to the Old Regime. Instead, this conversation, made possible by the instability of war and revolution, laid the groundwork for a reformation of the state and a later turn toward Empire. This book takes as its focus this period of transition between the Old Regime balance-of-power system and the Napoleonic Empire, using the struggle for the Western Mediterranean to understand how Revolution begot Empire.

The basic question at the heart of this book is one of change: How did the French Revolution change the way Britain and France interacted with the smaller powers of the Western Mediterranean, and by extension change the nature of the balance of power and their relationship with

[1] This story is revisited in Chap. 4 and is drawn from the British National Archives, FO 20/2, FO 79/10 and HO 528/15.

[2] There have been several recent and lively investigations into the world of diplomats and diplomacy. Perhaps most notable is the oeuvre of Jeremy Black, especially *British Diplomats and Diplomacy* (2001). More recently, Jennifer Mori's *The Culture of Diplomacy*, *Britain in Europe, 1750–1830* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2010) does an excellent job of placing diplomats and statesmen in their proper historical and cultural contexts.

each other? A broader way of framing this question is to link it into the larger historiographical issue of change and continuity during the French Revolutionary period. Specifically, in terms of international relations, I ask: To what extent was the struggle for the Western Mediterranean simply a continuation of the long eighteenth-century struggle for global control, with new language but similar goals? Was this essentially similar in nature to other eighteenth-century diplomatic conflicts such as the War of Jenkins Ear, the Falklands Crisis, or even the Anglo-French disputes over India? Or, did the French Revolution create something fundamentally new in terms of international relations, allowing states of all sizes to pursue aims that hitherto had been squashed under the scales of the balance of power?

The starting assumption is that the French Revolution did fundamentally alter the European international system, especially in the cases of Britain and France. Marsha and Linda Frey have convincingly shown that the French deliberately had radicalized their diplomatic corps by 1793, and that their disdain for international law was by calculation and design.[3] The British case is more complicated as the country was not fully committed to a Restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in the early years of the War of the First Coalition, nor was it content to let the French run roughshod over the balance of power. In either case, however, the French Revolution necessitated a reevaluation of its position relative to France and the minor powers.

Typically, however, this acknowledgment of the transitive nature of the French devolves into a discussion over Revolution and Counter-Revolution, ideas of "total war" or Tocquevillian questions of centralization. The question becomes: How effective were groups or states in achieving the goal of promulgating their ideological tenets abroad? In this

[3] Linda and Marsha Frey, "The Reign of the Charlatans Is Over: The French Revolutionary Attack on Diplomatic Practice," *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 65, no. 4 (Dec. 1993), 706–744; "Proven Patriots: The French Diplomatic Corps, 1789–1799" with Linda Frey (St. Andrews, Scotland: St. Andrew Studies in French History and Culture, 2011)—also available online: http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uklhandle/1 002311881. The work of Viriginie Martin also is extremely relevant here, especially "*Les Enjeux Diplomatiques dans le Magasin Encyclopédique: Du Rejet des Systèmes Politiques à la Redéfinition des Rapports Entre les Nations*," *La Révolution française*, 2012/2, numéro dirigé par Jean-Luc CHAPPEY, *L'encyclopédisme dans la presse savante [mis en ligne le 15 Septembre 2012*]; Marc Belissa, *Fraternité Universelle et Intérêt National (1713–1795). Les Cosmopolitiques du droit des Gens*, Paris, Éd. Kimé, 1998, 408–416.

book I want to challenge the notion that these assumed goals were self-evident and instead look at the sometimes tortured process of establishing coherent strategies and practices.[4] The focus will be on the false starts, missteps, contradictions, and dissonances that were critically important to the shaping of the international balance of power in a Revolutionary context. This is centered on war, specifically the War of the First Coalition, but I focus on points of contact where the British and French were forced to rely not on military or naval strength but on conversation and negotiation. The result is a view of both France and Britain that differs dramatically from what is traditionally depicted.

France at times acts as the stabilizing force, eschewing radical diplomacy for practical results. Meanwhile, Britain is an active force for destabilization as they seek to take advantage of the French weakness to establish themselves in a hegemonic position over the Mediterranean. Also, critically, this all comes through the utilization of the smaller powers as active intermediaries in the struggle between the two Great Powers. The question of continuity versus break becomes increasingly muddled as the active players take seemingly contradictory positions on the international stage.

The narrative is a complex one, featuring interactions on a wide variety of levels and in several distinct geographic settings. Nevertheless, this complexity is necessary, as it is fortunately a relic of a bygone mode of diplomatic history that we take the interactions between states on their highest level as descriptive of the entire process. To craft this narrative of Revolutionary conflict and conversation, I make use of the tools of New Diplomatic history, highlighting the actions of the individuals involved in shaping the diplomatic narrative, the role of non-state groups, and the practical importance of diplomatic symbols.[5]

[4] In particular, I am inspired here by Lauren Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) when she seeks to "move the analysis simultaneously out toward global (and structural) and in towards local and cultural phenomenon…reimagining global structure as the institutional matrix constructed out of practice and shaped by conflict," 4. See as well Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[5] Finney, Patrick. *Palgrave Advances in International History.* Houndmills/Basingstoke/Hampshire/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005; Fisher, John, and Antony Best, *On the Fringes of Diplomacy : Influences on British Foreign Policy, 1800–1945* (Farnham, Surrey/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011); Frank, R. "*Penser Historiquement les Relations Internationales.*" *Annuaire français de Relations Internationales*, 2003, 42–65; Mori, Jennifer. *The Culture of Diplomacy: Britain in Europe, C. 1750–1830* (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 2011)—distributed in the US exclusively by Palgrave

Moving beyond the well-known narratives surrounding events, such as Toulon, the shifting Spanish alliances, or the Italian Campaign, I trace the constituent elements of these key moments and link them with each other. A few examples include disputes over responsibility for refugees, offenses to statues, sequestering of grain and silk, ransom negotiations, and repeated questions of the nature of neutrality. Even though seemingly insubstantial events, a close examination of these phantasmal issues reveals the tensions and contradictions evident in the way the British and the French interacted with the Western Mediterranean powers.

The Western Mediterranean is uniquely suited for a study such as this, with the emphasis on demonstrating the importance of contextualizing the goals and motivations of diplomats during the Revolutionary era. In part, this is because of the nature of the struggle in this region. From nearly the beginning of the War of the First Coalition in the Mediterranean, the British and the French were at a stalemate, with the British ascendant at sea and the French dominating the land. This necessitated a diplomatic struggle for influence over the other Mediterranean states, with conflict taking place through conversation. Thus, the battlegrounds were the courts of Tuscany and Spain rather than the fields of Valmy or Flanders, and the battles were fought with diplomats and dispatches instead of soldiers and guns. This struggle for the Western Mediterranean was an integral part of the larger War of the First Coalition, but its diplomatic nature allows for a glimpse into how the French Revolution altered nonmilitary conflict.

In addition to this view of warfare without battle, the focus on the Mediterranean also fills a historiographical gap. I argue that to properly account for events such as the Toulon debacle, the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom, or even Napoleon's Italian Campaign, it is necessary to look not just at the Continent or to Napoleon but also toward the Mediterranean. It was in this region that British and French diplomats through their actions created an international system in which these twists and turns are

Macmillan, 2010; Mösslang, Markus, Torsten Riotte, and German Historical Institute in London. *The Diplomats' World: The Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Reynolds, D. "International History, the Cultural Turn and the Diplomatic Twitch." *Cultural and Social History* 3, no. 1 (2006): 75–91; Schweizer, K. W, and M. J Schumann. "The Revitalization of Diplomatic History: Renewed Reflections." Diplomacy and Statecraft 19, no. 2 (2008): 149–86; Trachtenberg, Marc. *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Windler, C. "Diplomatic History as a Field for Cultural Analyses: Muslim-Christian Relations in Tunis, 1700–1840," *The Historical Journal* 44, no. 1 (2001): 79–106.

comprehensible. The Mediterranean in general has long been recognized as an area where cultures, religions, and ideas circulated and came into contact with each other.[6] Functioning as a porous boundary, or even as a middle ground, the Mediterranean has been the site of continual and varied negotiation, largely separate from the centers of power in Europe or the Islamic World.[7] Crusaders, pirates, slaves, and merchants have all made the region fertile ground for historians looking to investigate activity at the interstices between state and subject, and the way states shaped themselves in reaction to these competing forces.[8]

Oddly, however, there has been a relative neglect of the region in the Age of Revolutions. Most scholarly works on the Mediterranean begin in the Early Modern Era and only include a postscript on the latter half of the eighteenth century. The traditional narrative is that by the eighteenth century the region was mostly normalized and static, at least compared to the previous centuries.[9] On one level this is accurate. The conflict between the Christian and the Islamic worlds by and large ended after the Barbary Coast states signed tribute treaties with the major European powers in

[6] Iain Chambers, *Mediterranean Crossings: The Politics of an Interrupted Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); Furio Cerutti and Rodolfo Ragionieri, *Identities and Conflicts: The Mediterranean* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001); John Julius Norwich, *The Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2006); Benjamin Arbel and David Jacoby, *Intercultural Contacts in the Medieval Mediterranean* (Portland, OR: F. Cass, 1996)—these are a few brief examples, not to mention the seminal works of Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), and of course Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

[7] Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Despite its potential overuse, White's work is useful for understanding the way in which ideas and identities are formed away from the centers of power, and the agency of third-party actors within that formation. Similarly, Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), highlights the way in which a stable geographic boundary served as a catalyst for the formation of national identity.

[8] Two noteworthy and recent examples of this broad historiography are Molly Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Mediterranean* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010); and Gillian Lee Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs: France and Slavery in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011). There are numerous other examples as well, though these do an exceptional job of providing an innovative methodological approach. See also Isser Woloch, *The New Regime* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), for a perspective not isolated to the Mediterranean, but broadly investigating the changing relationship between state and subject.

[9] See Greene's introduction in *Catholic Pirates* for a discussion of this theme.

the early eighteenth century.[10] In general, the Age of Exploration moved the key economic conflicts to the East and West Indies, so the Western Mediterranean paled in commercial significance to Haiti or India. In terms of influence, following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the borders of the smaller states began to solidify as the Great Powers divided up the Italian states and determined spheres of influence.[11] Although not overtly colonial, the Great Powers of Europe treated the Western Mediterranean as a periphery, and a relatively settled one at that.

On another level, however, the Western Mediterranean was far from normalized or settled. Chapter 2 covers this in more depth, but the coming of the French Revolution provided a spark that ignited growing tension over the construction and expansion of the state that reverberated across both Europe and the globe.[12] Traditional rivalries were upended and rearranged, and the formation of the First Coalition between competitors such as Britain and Spain, as well as Austria and Piedmont, stands as a testament to the ambiguous nature of international politics in the 1790s.[13] Further still, the creation of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom introduced a new state, backed by the increasingly powerful British imperial structure, into an already turbulent region. The French Revolution destabilized the Western Mediterranean and necessitated changes in the ways states and their representatives interacted with each other, which in turn shaped the Revolutionary dynamic itself.

[10] Godfrey Fisher's *Barbary Legend: War Trade and Piracy in North Africa, 1415–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957) remains the most comprehensive, if dated, analysis of the Barbary Coast.

[11] See Greg Hanlon, *Early Modern Italy, 1550–1800: Three Seasons of Change* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000). The oeuvre of Jeremy Black also covers this phenomenon, especially in "On the 'Old System' and the 'Diplomatic Revolution' of the Eighteenth Century," *International History Review* 12 (1990): 201–23; and *European International Relations, 1648–1815* (New York: Palgrave, 2002); and *The Rise of the European Powers, 1679–1793* (New York: E. Arnold; distributed in the USA by Routledge, Chapman, and Hill, 1990).

[12] For a brief examination of the historiography surrounding the uniformity or tensions in the years leading up to the French Revolution, see Marc Belissa, "Can a Powerful Republic Be Peaceful? The Debate in the Year IV on the Place of France in the European Order," in *Republics at War, 1776–1840: Revolutions, Conflicts, and Geopolitics in Europe and the Atlantic World*, ed. by P. Serna, De Francesco, and Judith Miller (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[13] Paul Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994). Jeremy Black also has numerous books that examine this dynamic from the British perspective.

This process was not unique to the Western Mediterranean but was in fact a global phenomenon. Scholars of the Age of Revolutions have long recognized the symbiotic relationship between colonial and continental revolution. R. R. Palmer stands as one of the earliest advocates of the inclusion of the broader Atlantic world into his conception of the Age of Democratic Revolutions.[14] This framework has been picked up by more recent scholars who have examined the Caribbean with aplomb, showing the reciprocal relationship between France and the Atlantic and complicating the narrative of "Democratic Revolutions."[15] Nevertheless, although the Atlantic world paradigm has been and continues to be a powerful and necessary historiographical trend, it is limited. As one recent work on the global perspective on the French Revolution puts it: "… [E]ven this new expanded Atlantic model is too constrained for understanding the revolutionary dynamics of the era. … During the Revolution itself, France's cultural dialogue and colonial ambitions encompassed areas, notably places such as Italy, India and Egypt, which do not fit in the Atlantic framework."[16]

To correct this, one recent trend has been to introduce a Global Imperial Crisis Model. This model links the social disruption within Europe to the scramble for colonies in the eighteenth century, thus combining imperialism and Revolution in a global context. Stretching beyond the confines of the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean is given equal importance, as well

[14] R. R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760–1800* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959). To his credit, Palmer also included at least one example from the Mediterranean in his study—Corsica's failed quest for independence in 1769—and a brief discussion of the Constitution of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom. The latter argument will be addressed in Chap. 5. Palmer also has one of the only scholarly works on the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom. In a short article he argues for using the Kingdom as a lesson for historians to examine not just the successes of history but also the failures. Although compelling, it is not especially relevant for this study. For more on the Atlantic World Paradigm, see Jacques Godechot, *La Grande Nation: L'expansion Revolutionnaire de la France dans le Monde de 1789 á 1799* (Paris: Aubier, 1956), as well as the recent discussion by Emmet Kennedy in *French Historians, 1900–200: New Historical Writing in Twentieth-Century France,* eds Philip Daileader and Philip Whalen (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

[15] John P. Garrigus and David Geggus are at the forefront of this movement. Laurent Dubois is also significant with his *Avengers of the New World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004) and *Colony of Citizens* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[16] "Introduction" in *The French Revolution in Global Perspective*, ed. by Suzanne Desan, Lynn Hunt, and William Max Nelson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 5.

as China and the Middle East. This model replaces a democratic narrative with one driven by imperialism, and it provides a necessary transition between the colonialism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the imperialism of the nineteenth and twentieth.[17]

In both models, however, there has been neglect of the Western Mediterranean. Part of the blame for this historiographical neglect, paradoxically, must be placed at the feet of Fernand Braudel. This discussion mostly avoids direct conversation with Braudel, as it both falls outside of his temporal scope, and falls into the realm of "event-based" history that earned his skepticism. Still, his impact on the historical perception of the region is undeniable. His work on the Early Modern Era established the Mediterranean world as a valid field of inquiry, but arguably ended it as well by creating a history "of" and not "in" the Mediterranean.[18] Histories of the Mediterranean inspired by Braudel often have little room for global revolutions, whereas histories of global revolutions have struggled to integrate Braudel's "Mediterranean" as a whole. To ameliorate this, I take the opposite approach. I do not purport to give a complete history *of* the region, but rather an in-depth investigation of unstable international politics during the French Revolution *in* the western half of the Mediterranean.

This unsettled period was not permanent, nor were its unique characteristics, such as the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom, particularly long-lasting. Temporally, I place the beginning of this phenomenon with the start of the French Revolution, as it was the Revolution that forced action and reaction throughout the European community. Given my focus on the Western Mediterranean, I choose to close my investigation with

[17] Jeremy Adelman, "An Age of Imperial Revolutions," *American Historical Review* 113, (2008, 310–40); C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian* (Reading, MA: Longman, 1989); and *The Birth of the Modern World, 1770–1914* (New York: Blackwell, 2004). Lauren Benton's work in *Law and Colonial Cultures* is conceptually similar, though focused much broader in terms of timespan.

[18] This is the argument of Peregrine Horden in *The Corrupting Sea*, where he argues that Braduel established the Mediterranean as a frame of inquiry itself, as opposed to placing the Mediterranean within a broader frame. See as well Horden, "Mediterranean Excuses: Historical Writing on the Mediterranean since Braudel," *History and Anthropology*, 16:1, 25–30. I agree in principle with a critique of Braduel, and the goal of Horden's work blending together the different narratives across the ancient and medieval periods is admirable and even successful. However, the "reflexive realism" that forms the conceptual basis for the work ultimately joins Braudel in lacking analytical relevance in my attempt to bring the Mediterranean in line with a more global perspectives of the past.

Napoleon's successful Italian Campaign in 1796 and 1797. It is certainly possible to stretch the broader European narrative onward through the Directory and Consular periods, and even to the more definitive resolution that occurred in Vienna in 1814 and 1815.[19] In this case, however, I deliberately take a more confined approach in order to closely trace the various forces at play in the late eighteenth century.

To broaden the geographic and/or temporal scale would run the risk of flattening the perspectives on Revolution and Counter-Revolution, embracing them as a framework used to understand the early Revolutionary period through the lens of the following decades instead of viewing them in their own organic context. For this book, the key argument is that in the Western Mediterranean between 1789 and 1796, there was no well-defined motivating factor for Revolution or Counter-Revolution. Instead the frameworks were so broad as to be almost devoid of meaning, featuring twists and turns, peaks and valleys, and do not fit easily into stable categorization.

Thus, while taking place in the context of the War of the First Coalition in the Western Mediterranean, this is not a narrative concerned with the war between Counter-Revolutionary Britain and Revolutionary France. Rather, I am interested in the dissonance within these frameworks and the effects of the contradictions on the shape of international politics. In this way, I also hope to engage with the lively debate over the Revolutionary Wars and the birth of "total war." David Bell has argued convincingly for ideology as the dominant force in this new type of warfare, focusing on diametrically opposed worldviews clashing in Revolutionary Europe.[20]

In my work, I do not seek to replace ideology as a major force, or even the major force, in shaping the conflict between Britain and France in the Western Mediterranean. Nonetheless, by examining the contradictions and difficulties in applying those ideologies in the context of the Western Mediterranean, I hope to nuance the ideological approach and to offer a different perspective on both the source of the ideological impulses of Britain and France, and the impact of the struggle for the Western Mediterranean. In other words, I do not argue the importance of ideological competition, but I seek to problematize the nature of

[19] Paul Schroeder took this broad view with far greater acuity than I could hope to in his seminal *Transformation of European Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[20] David A. Bell, *The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It.* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007).

those ideologies, showing that Britain was not a stalwart supporter of Old Regime Restoration, and that France was not a monolithic force imposing radical Revolution.

To access the interior of these competing ideologies, I take the discussion further than a struggle just between Britain and France. A key point of emphasis in this book is the role of the broad spectrum of powers in shaping the form of international politics in the Revolutionary Western Mediterranean.[21] To just look at Britain and France is to miss the actual sites of production for their respective views. International political ideology was formed not in a vacuum, and not simply in London or Paris, but through a multilayered conversation. I see two countervailing tendencies at work that produce a more complex Revolution–Counter-Revolution narrative that includes the role of these other powers. The Italian states, Corsica, and Toulon exemplify the first tendency, whereby Revolution or Counter-Revolution are appropriated as useful categories; however, under this broad umbrella these small actors on the international stage pursued diverse and at times contradictory aims stemming from their own interests.

The second tendency is best represented by Spain. This was not a small power attempting to protect its neutrality in the face of ideologies of Revolution and Counter-Revolution, using whatever category seemed appropriate at the time. Instead, Spain was motivated simultaneously by an ideological similarity with the conservative tenants of Counter-Revolution and by historical interests that aligned with France. As the forces of ideology and historical interests ebbed and flowed in power, so too did Spanish allegiance. In both of these cases, I argue that to understand the roots of international conflict and cooperation, one must privilege the contributions of actors beyond France and Britain. By highlighting the interactions between ideology, mutual support of self-interest, and historical connections with both Britain and France, I demonstrate how these countervailing forces coalesced to make the history of the Revolutionary Wars in the Western Mediterranean.

Therefore, I embrace a more complex view of the French Revolution as a friction-filled process defined less by national narratives and more by

[21] I draw here from the work of Michael Broers, especially *Napoleonic Imperialism and the Savoyard Monarchy, 1773–1821: State Building in Piedmont* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997). See also Stuart Woolf, *A History of Italy 1700–1860: The Social Constraints of Political Change* (London: Methuen & Co., 1979); and Greg Hanlon, *Early Modern Italy, 1550–1800: Three Seasons of Change* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

local exigencies. This is an extension of François Furet's work into the international arena, breaking away from the anachronistic and teleological imposition of a Revolution versus Counter-Revolution dichotomy.[22] Instead, I propose viewing the period as an open opportunity for the British, French, and the other Mediterranean powers to reimagine international politics. This opportunity was a direct result of the Revolutionary attack on the Old Regime's balance of power. The resulting international instability did not provide a clear vision for a New Regime, or a path to return to the Old. Rather, this instability necessitated interaction and negotiation between diplomats who were in turn shaped by their local, in this case Mediterranean, contexts. Only by examining these interactions and their contexts can we understand the subsequent changes in European international politics in light of the previous events, rather than in the shadow of those to come.

In Chapter 2, I begin by briefly providing Old Regime background into the Mediterranean region, as well as the diplomatic cultures and goals of Britain and France. A key point of focus in the first half of the chapter is to introduce Corsica, specifically in the context of the dispute over ownership of the island in 1769. This dispute took place following the French purchase of the island from the Genoese and featured British resistance; however, in contrast to the 1790s, both parties interacted according to normalized, balance-of-power motivations. The second half of the chapter contrasts this with the diplomacy following the French Revolution and the radicalization of the French diplomatic corps. In addition to briefly establishing this narrative from the perspective of London and Paris, I move the focus to Tuscany where the diplomats put into practice this radicalization and their reactions. The struggle for neutrality is highlighted here, as Tuscany sought to play the French and the British ministers off of each other to maintain its neutrality. The purpose of this chapter is to corroborate that the Western Mediterranean was an active and open region for diplomatic interactions, especially through introduction of the importance of the minor powers, such as Tuscany, to shaping this narrative.

Chapter 3 returns to Corsica, this time examining the island in the context of the French Revolution. I focus on the island throughout the book because of its place as a key site of conflict for both the British and the French, allowing clear comparisons between the two. Specifically,

[22] Francoise Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

this chapter highlights the way interactions between France and Corsica shaped the way French diplomats perceived their mission in the Western Mediterranean. The main case study in this chapter is a failed invasion of Sardinia and the subsequent investigative Commission sent from Paris. This Commission laid bare the tensions between the island and the capital, ultimately resulting in a split between Corsica and France. The chapter shows how discussions between the Parisian Commissioners and the Corsican legislators were indicative of the plurality of interpretations of the French Revolution in the Western Mediterranean, and the power of these differing interpretations to shape international relations.

Next is Chap. 4 that examines the formation of the First Coalition in the Mediterranean as a British response to the French attack on the international system. This chapter begins with a brief examination of the debate in London over the aims of the war and whether the fight was against France or the Revolution. This links in with several of the threads introduced in Chapter 2, especially relating to the relationship between Great Britain and the Bourbon monarchy. This background is important because the majority of the chapter focuses on the events in Toulon at the end of 1793, where the British became custodians of the city for the Bourbons. There are three main points in the chapter.

The first is the tensions within the First Coalition itself, nearly from its inception. There was no consensus concerning the end-game of the alliance, with the vague phrase "indemnity for the past and security for the future" dominating diplomatic discussions. Chapter 4 introduces the tensions between Spain and Britain, which becomes important; this is discussed in subsequent chapters. The second point is that just as there was no consensus within the supposed Counter-Revolutionary Coalition, the Toulonese also represented a distinct and, at times contradictory, iteration of a Revolutionary and Counter-Revolutionary agenda. Finally, and the focus of the last part of Chapter 4, I examine closely how the initial success of the Coalition caused a domino effect throughout the Mediterranean as Admiral Samuel Hood sent diplomats all over Italy, as well as into North Africa. The descriptions of these excursions show that the inconsistent, unstable nature of the First Coalition was not simply internal, or the product of external feedback from the Toulonese; it was in fact endemic throughout the region.

The evacuation of Toulon by the Coalition serves as the halfway point of the narrative, with the conflict between Britain and France settling in to a diplomatic struggle for influence with the minor powers. Chapter 5

follows the British from Toulon as they made their way to Corsica and established the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom from 1794 to 1796. Just as Chap. 3 asked how Corsica contributed to the shaping of French Revolutionary international interaction, the chapter focuses on the same from the British perspective. Again, Corsica was not simply a passive site for conflict, but an active agent in shaping the international arena.

Therefore, the focus of Chap. 5 is both on the formation of the Anglo-Coriscan Kingdom and the international repercussions throughout the Western Mediterranean. The very act of creating this new state further upset the balance of power the British were ostensibly protecting, especially among the Italian and North African states. This further demonstrates that the Western Mediterranean was an unstable region, while also showing clearly how this instability affected the ability of the British and the French to form a clear response not only to each other but also to the rising tide of minor power problems.

Chapter 6 returns the focus to the French from 1794 to 1796, following their expulsion from Corsica. The focal points for the chapter are the origins of the Italian Campaign, especially in the contest for the Spanish alliance in 1795 and 1796; it picks up on several threads that stretch throughout the narrative, especially from Toulon. The French achieved military success against Spain, but more critically the chapter shows how the French also morphed their interactions with the Spanish in order to become suitable partners, subverting the British in this role. Chapter 6 further highlights the way in which Revolution and Counter-Revolution were fully malleable terms in the conflict between Britain and France, as the larger eighteenth-century imperial conflict subsumed these discussions because both states vied for the allegiance or neutrality of Spain. The chapter also begins to clearly link the events of the previous three chapters in to Napoleon's Italian Campaign. It was only through an alliance with Spain that the French were able to devote the troops and energy to Italy, and it was only through British failures throughout the Mediterranean that Italy was as susceptible to invasion as Napoleon would show it to be.

Finally, Chap. 7, returns to Italy in 1796, especially Piedmont, Genoa, and Tuscany. Just as in Chap. 2, this chapter brings the British and the French narratives back together as international politics once again began to normalize. The chapter describes three events that served as the culmination of the struggle for the Western Mediterranean. First is the signing of the Treaty of San Il Defonso in 1796, completing the Spanish turn from allies of Britain to enemies. Second is the Italian Campaign, with

special focus again on Tuscany and its struggle for neutrality against both the British and the French. Finally, I return one last time to Corsica as the French retake the island and integrate it into the French state. The end of Chap. 7 is not the reestablishment of the Old Regime, or even the strict consolidation of Revolutionary gains. Rather, it concludes with the reassertion of a form of international order. The war between Britain and France continued, but the struggle for the Western Mediterranean and the shape of the international political system was, for the most part, concluded.

To return to the question at the heart of this book: How did the French Revolution change the way Britain and France interacted with each other through the medium of the Western Mediterranean? The struggle for the Western Mediterranean, with its complex and often contradictory web of interactions, is difficult to reconcile with a traditional Manichean framework of conflict between Revolutionary and Counter-Revolutionary forces. In this book, I challenge that framework, instead embracing the contradictions as a causal force for the actions and reactions of both the Great Powers and the minor actors in the Western Mediterranean. This is less a story about a struggle between Revolution and Counter-Revolution, and much more a story about a struggle *within* Revolution and Counter-Revolution, and how those internal struggles shaped the larger ideological conflict during the 1790s.

CHAPTER 2

The Western Mediterranean in the Age of Revolutions

The Western Mediterranean in the latter half of the eighteenth century was in quiet crisis. For centuries, the region had been a key zone of conflict where Christian and Islamic powers interacted, where pirates and merchants roamed, and where Europe shaped the international political arena. By the eighteenth century, however, the era of the Crusades and Reconquista had passed, and although corsairs did still occasionally roam the waters, the Golden Age of Piracy was a relic of a bygone time. Sailors and soldiers had previously operated in the borderlands provided by the Mediterranean, navigating between different religions, states, and cultures, both great and small. Now those borderlands had shrunk and the identity of the Mediterranean was in question. This was especially true of the western half between the Iberian and Italian Peninsulas, which had become predominately European. After the Treaty of Utrecht and the various wars of succession in the first half of the eighteenth century, the boundaries and borders of the previous centuries were no longer meaningful classifications but were instead subsumed by Habsburg and Bourbon rivalry.[1]

By the second half of the century, however, a new set of conflicts emerged, often resulting directly from the "settling" of the Western

[1] Molly Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Mediterranean* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010); Lauren Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

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J. Meeks, *France, Britain, and the Struggle for the Revolutionary Western Mediterranean*, War, Culture and Society, 1750–1850,
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Mediterranean by European powers. As the Mediterranean became increasingly European, the major powers also expanded globally, leading to a question of whether the Mediterranean should be seen as a colonial arena for expansion or within the Continental balance of power. On the one hand, European powers were wary of bringing colonial competition to a region so close to home, preferring to treat the Mediterranean as an extension of Europe. This extension made sense geographically and to an extent culturally, as much of the imperial focus shifted to far off exotic locales across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Simultaneously, however, as the major powers divided the areas of the world into spheres of influence, they also slowly began to pick apart the tangle of dynastic ties and claims of neutrality that served as the basis for stability in the Western Mediterranean. The small states bordering and within the area of the Sea were more likely to be treated as areas for expansion and competition, not sovereign European states.

One example of this is process can be found on the island of Corsica. Since the Renaissance, Corsica had belonged to the Genoese. The relationship had never been a pleasant one, and as Genoese power waned during the eighteenth century, the Corsicans made numerous attempts at independence. The Genoese were only able to counteract these insurrections with outside, namely French, assistance. After a nearly successful revolt in 1738, the Corsicans under the leadership of Pasquale Paoli managed to effectively eject the Genoese from the island in the late 1750s. The Corsicans then established themselves as an independent nation, and in doing so became an example of rebellion against despotism that inspired Enlightened thinkers in all of Europe. Perhaps the most well-known admirer of Corsica was Jean Jacques Rousseau, who claimed that if anywhere in Europe was suitable for a "noble savage" it was Corsica. Rousseau even went so far as to propose a constitution for the fledgling nation, though it was never directly implemented.[2]

In reaction to Paoli's successful rebellion, Genoa once again turned to France for assistance in stabilizing the island. The close relationship

[2] Thadd E. Hall, *France and the Eighteenth Century Corsican Question* (New York: New York University Press, 1971). Rousseau first mentioned Corsica in *The Social Contract*, but expounded more fully on his ideas in *The Constitutional Project for Corsica*. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Alan Ritter, and Julia Conaway Bondanella, *Rousseau's Political Writings: New Translations, Interpretive Notes, Backgrounds, Commentaries* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), 54; this is the reference to Corsica in *The Social Contract*, while the "*Projet pour la Corse*" can be found on 324.

between France and Genoa was natural, given their proximity and shared interests in the Mediterranean, as well as the financial ties many French had with Genoese commerce. The French aided the Genoese in Corsica not simply to strengthen their relationship with Genoa however—the French were justifiably concerned about another nation gaining influence in such close proximity to their Mediterranean fleet in Toulon. Spain, England, and even the Holy Roman Empire expressed a desire to aid the Genoese in return for concessions on Corsica. Therefore, it is perhaps also understandable that following the almost complete failure of the Genoese to act successfully against the Corsicans in the 1750s and 1760s, the French sought greater compensation for their assistance. The French foreign ministry, led by Choiseul, pushed the Genoese for more than just allowances on Corsica. They wanted the island itself.[3]

Although Genoa could have theoretically turned to the other powers for aid, this would have been a dire insult to its powerful neighbor, and by any measure Corsica had now become more trouble than it was worth. In 1768, the Genoese sold Corsica to the French for a sum of 40 million *livres.* Technically, there was a stipulation in the treaty that Genoa could later buy Corsica back, but in fact the island became a French possession.[4] The fortuitous circumstances surrounding Choiseul's negotiations with Genoa have led some historians to argue for a secret conspiracy stretching over decades designed to steal Corsica away from the Genoese.[5] Although this conspiracy theory has been debunked for the most part, the sale of Corsica represents the changing nature of the Mediterranean political sphere. The Genoese and Corsicans were no longer participants in the negotiation and conflict over Mediterranean borders as they had been in the Early Modern Era, but instead were the borders themselves.

The French were not alone in their interest in the Western Mediterranean. Bourbon expansion into the Mediterranean was potentially problematic for the British. In the 1760s the British state was chiefly

[3] René Boudard, *Gênes et la France dans la Deuxième Moitié du XVIII Siècle* (Paris: Mouton, 1962). See also Hall, Chap. 5

[4] The purchase of Corsica would later create some tension between Revolutionary France and Genoa and continue even into the nineteenth century. Rene Emmanuelli, *L'Equivoque de Corse, 1768–1805* (Ajaccio: La Marge, 1989), traces in detail the discussions between France and Genoa concerning the island.

[5] Hall's book remains the best account for both the event and the literature surrounding it, but see also René Boudard, *Gênes et la France;* Louis Villat, *La Corse de 1768–1789*, 2 vols. (Besancon: Millot Frères, 1924–1925).

concerned with maintaining naval dominance, and the French acquisition of Corsica posed a direct threat to that, specifically to their commercial dealings in the Mediterranean. On a social level, the English *philosophes* decried the intervention of France as despotic. Key figures (e.g., James Boswell, Mrs. Montague, and Lord Lyttelton) all waxed lyrical in support of the Corsicans and Paoli.[6] The British envoy to France, William, the 4th Earl of Rochford, told Choiseul that "by far the greatest part of the nation" was outraged over Corsica. The Secretary of State informed the Sardinian envoy that public unrest over Corsica might force the ministry to war, though this was not preferable.[7]

Public opinion translated into public action as well. A large bequest for the Corsicans was organized in London, leading to French government complaints. Choiseul used a particularly telling argument in lambasting the actions of the British public. In January of 1769 he told the British envoy that in response, "he would open a subscription in favour of the people of New York—I suppose he meant the Bostonians." This led the envoy to comment: "There is a wide difference between a private subscription in favor of the Corsicans, and a subscription set on foot under the auspices of a French minister in favor of His Majesty's refractory subjects at Boston."[8]

Indeed, there would have been a wide difference because, despite the outpouring of public opinion in support of Corsica, the British government did nothing. That there was such a strong public opinion highlights the antagonism at play between the British and the French, but the fact that the British government neglected to take action also demonstrates respect for the balance of power. France obtained Corsica through a legal treaty, and considering that Corsica in no way directly affected British subjects or holdings, there was not adequate justification for pressing the subject.

[6] James Boswell, *An account of Corsica: The Journal of a tour to that Island; and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli* (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1768); Richard Cole, "James Oglethorpe as revolutionary propagandist: The case of Corsica, 1768," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 74, no. 3 (1990): 463–474.

[7] British National Archives at Kew (BNA hereafter), SP 78/275 fol. 60, Rochford to Shelburne, 2 June 1768; N. Tracy, "The Government of Duke Grafton and the French Invasion of Corsica in 1768," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 1974: 169–182; Hall, *France and the Eighteenth Century Corsican Question*; Black, *Debating Foreign Policy in Eighteenth Century Britain*, 177.

[8] BNA SP 78/277, fol. 67, Harcourt to Weymouth, 18 Jan., 8 Feb., 7 Dec. 1769. Also see BNA, SP 78/277, fol. 11, 279, 192–3.

Commercially, Malta and Sardinia were of more importance in terms of securing the valuable trade routes from the Eastern Mediterranean into the West. Strategically, Gibraltar had been in British possession since the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 and served as the entry point for any British action in the Mediterranean. At this point, Corsica was superfluous.

The ideological outpouring was simply not enough reason to go to war, especially given the current global focus of British foreign policy. For the French, meanwhile, allowing Corsica to remain independent and thus susceptible to British or Austrian interference was entirely unacceptable and would have been further demonstration of weakness after the 1763 Treaty of Versailles. In essence, in this case of brinksmanship, the French won without much protest from the British government. Ideology did not trump practicality on either side.

Beyond the specific case of Corsica, this demonstrates a shift in the British perception of France. As far as foreign policy was concerned, the British increasingly conceived of the French as a colonial and maritime threat and devoted less attention to their European policies, Corsica included. This reflects the perception that the power of France had been contained after 1763, at least temporarily, despite a concerted effort on the part of the French to reestablish themselves militarily and diplomatically in Europe and colonially. Because of the perceived dominance of the British, the government in London did not have to suffer unbearable domestic outrage over Corsica. The ministry ascertained, correctly, that the public support was ephemeral and that there would be little or no backlash over allowing the French to control the island. The British welcomed Paoli into exile in Britain, putting him on a pension, but for the time being, Corsica was firmly in French hands and the British were happy to come out of the incident without bloodshed.

For the French, their victory in Corsica required quite a lot of bloodshed. Even though they did ultimately quash the independence movement, it took upwards of 50,000 troops. Although preventing another country from having the island as a Mediterranean base was valuable, Corsica itself gave them very little for such a considerable amount of effort. There was no cultural or dynastic link tying France and the island together. There was potential for developing industry, especially given the wealth of timber on the island, but this was a difficult prospect. Corsica's main export was chestnuts, and while famine and hunger would soon have integral parts to play in French history, it is not likely any amount of chestnuts from Corsica would have stemmed the tide of Revolution. Corsica did

provide the French government an opportunity to prove their Enlightened critics wrong and practice a form of Enlightened despotism. Overall, this policy would struggle and ultimately fail to win the hearts and minds of the Corsicans, but a certain family by the name of Buonaparte did take advantage of a policy allowing Corsican nobility access to French schools.[9]

This brief example of Western Mediterranean diplomacy shows three significant principles. First is the attempt by France to regain some semblance of prestige and control over international politics. Although Corsica was not a significant gain, it was nonetheless an example of Louis XVI and Choiseul flexing their diplomatic muscles and reminding the British that they were still a consideration in the balance of power. This would continue throughout the next decade, reaching a high point in the War of American Independence. Militarily, Marechal de Castries instituted a consistent shipbuilding program in the 1770s and 1780s in an effort to challenge the British navy.[10] Castries proposed expanding the navy from its traditional strength of 60 ships to a permanent fleet of 80.[11] Even though this ran the risk of appearing to be an arms race with Britain, and of stretching the naval personnel too thin, Castries did not wish to miss an opportunity to take advantage of any British weakness on the seas; and he sought to expand French influence out of the Mediterranean and into the Atlantic.[12] This naval buildup would have a profound impact on the political situation in the Mediterranean during the Revolutionary years, as the tension between French diplomatic and foreign policy aims and British naval dominance would be on sharp display in the Revolutionary Mediterranean.

Second, this demonstrates the tenuous hold the British had on their place atop the balance of power. There was a clear but subtle shift away

[9] Thadd E. Hall, "Enlightened Thought and Practice in Corsica," *American Historical Review* 74, no. 3 (1969): 880–905.

[10] Étienne Taillemite, *Histoire Ignorée de la Marine Française* (Paris: Perrin, 2003), 177–178, 199; Patrick Villiers, *La Marine de Louis XVI* (Grenoble: J.P. Debbane, 1983); William Cormack, *Revolution and Political Conflict in the French Navy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[11] Maurice Loire, *La Marine Royale en 1789* (Paris: A. Colin, 1892), 1, lists the goal stated in 1786, which was not yet attained in 1789: 81 ships of the line, 81 frigates, etc. Jonathan Dull, *The French Navy and American Independence: A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774–1787* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 337–338; this book traces this new level to Castries' proposals of 1781.

[12] Cormack, 23. The expansion of the navy in the 1780s did not solve the problems with the French navy, with a lack of materials and men continually stymying successful expansion.

from the strategy of strong defensive pacts that had dominated the first half of the eighteenth century. Instead, the British moved toward a commercially motivated policy, with the Mediterranean significant in terms of shipping freedom and port availability, but not territorial acquisition.[13] Unwilling to enter into any sort of actual dispute with France over Corsica, the British instead practiced a policy of placing most of their focus and energy into colonial matters (e.g., the Falklands crisis in 1770, or later the Nootka Sound dispute in the early 1790s).[14] They did not forget their old enemy, the French, but placed their competition on a global scale, with the Mediterranean as only one of many arenas.

This global turn had well-documented repercussions, especially in the American colonies. What it meant to be British came under a great deal of scrutiny, and the status of the British in the Mediterranean was no exception.[15] The issue of the place of the British within the international system would come to a crisis point during the French Revolution, as the First Coalition was in some ways a return to strong defensive alliances, but with the added complexity of British commercial aims and the radicalization of French foreign policy after 1792.

The final principle at play is found in the Italian States. Following the conquest of Corsica, the Italian powers looked down on the Genoese for introducing the French into their region and ultimately losing the island for the Italian sphere. As one contemporary reformer put it, "that the desperation of the Genoese and Corsicans should call barbarians into Italy is not a good thing today when all Italy has its own princes either designated or ruling."[16] Despite this protestation of self-reliance, in reality these states in the early part of the century had become pawns and objects in the game of European politics, utilized by the Great Powers for their own gain. By the middle of the century, it was clear to the Italian states themselves that they wallowed in relative impotence in the face of the military might available to France, Britain, Spain, and Austria; as a result, they mostly sought neutrality in an attempt to extricate themselves from the game. There was a consensus among the Italian states that the place of Italy was on the

[13] Black, *Debating Foreign Policy*; John C. Clarke, *British Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, 1782–1865* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1989). Chaps. 1, 2.

[14] GW Rice, "British Foreign Policy and the Falkland Islands Crisis of 1770–1771," *International History Review* 32, no. 2 (2010): 273–305.

[15] Linda Colley, *Britons, Forging the Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[16] Quoted from Stuart Woolf, *A History of Italy 1700–1860: The Social Constraints of Political Change* (London: Methuen & Co, 1979), 41.

periphery of Europe, away from direct participation in dynastic politics and free from foreign interference.

Indeed, in 1752 Vienna and Madrid confirmed that Italian crowns should remain separate from the crowns of other states. In 1759, when Charles of Naples succeeded to the Spanish throne, it was the agreement between France, Austria, and Spain, supported by Britain, that ensured the maintenance of the status quo by blocking the accession to the Neapolitan throne of Charles's brother, Philip of Parma.[17] This was, in many ways, the most settled period for the Western Mediterranean. In short, the it was a prime example of a mostly successful system of consensual checks that operated courtesy of the balance-of-power system in European politics. Yet, that success would not continue through the Age of Revolutions. Just as the latter half of the eighteenth century saw a disruption of this dynamic in Continental Europe, culminating in the French Revolution and Napoleon, so too was it disrupted in the Western Mediterranean, opening the area up for conflict and contention.

Aside from Italy, North Africa, specifically Tunis and Algiers, also contributed to breaking open the short-lived rigidity of the Mediterranean political system. Although their role was considerably smaller in the eighteenth century than it had been in the past, both powers enjoyed their status as wild cards in the Mediterranean game, able to cause havoc should they choose. Without familial ties or real preferences as to who governed the European edge of the Mediterranean, their main interest was in monetary gain. Thus, the French and the British occasionally engaged in warfare against them, but more often took part in a game of bribes and supposed insults, trying to ensure that the Barbary Coast would remain neutral if nothing else. Although Italy wanted to remain on the periphery via maintenance of neutrality, the Barbary Coast powers used their neutrality as a way to insert themselves into European affairs for their own gain, but without attracting unwanted military attention.

Aside from their relationship with the major powers, the Barbary Coast states were also nearly universally loathed by the Italians, Maltese, and Corsicans.[18] The Corsican flag, which is still placed on shirts and coffee

[17] For excellent details on this process, see the entirety of Woolf, *A History of Italy*, but especially the first chapter.

[18] Adrian Tinniswood, *Pirates of Barbary: Corsairs, Conquests and Captivity in the Seventeenth-Century Mediterranean* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2010); J. S. Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies, 1660–1760* (Hampshire, UK: Hambledon Press, 1987); Henry Laurens,

mugs to this day, consists of the decapitated head of a Barbary pirate. Thus, although the Italian States demonstrated a degree of solidarity with each other, the Barbary Coast states served to complicate matters by maintaining neutrality with the major powers but antagonizing the minor powers. In the 1790s, this antagonism proved particularly problematic for the diplomatic maneuverings of both the French and the British as they sought to maintain good relations with both.

Spain also merits consideration in the overall dynamic of the Western Mediterranean leading up to the French Revolution. Even though they were eminently powerful prior to the eighteenth century, by the Age of Revolutions they too often were relegated to peripheral status. As opposed to the Italian states and the Barbary Coast states, however, Spain constantly sought to reassert itself into the larger European power dynamic. Nevertheless, despite the fact that they had the third largest European fleet in 1789, both French and British interests overshadowed the Spanish in the Mediterranean.[19] Key to this was the British possession of Gibraltar, which stunted the Spanish ability to project forces into the Mediterranean and gave the British disproportionate influence relative to their proximity and territorial holdings in the region.

Prior to the completion of the Suez Canal in the mid-nineteenth century, the only way in and out of the Mediterranean by means of ship was by passing Gibraltar. In 1727, the Spanish attempted to retake it, but the British were able to hold the Rock and maintain it for strategic purposes.[20] The tension with the British did not, however, always equal friendly relations with France. The three *pact de famílles* of the eighteenth century showed not only a predilection toward support of France but also a constant shifting of priorities. Spain was pushed to the margins of the Mediterranean question, though certainly not completely out of consid-

Les Origines Intellectuelles de l'Expédition d'Egypte: L'Orientalisme Islamisant en France (Editions Isis, 1987).

[19] Minorca was reclaimed by the Treaty of Versailles in 1783, while Gibraltar remained British. Desmond Gregory, *Minorca, The Illusory Prize: A History of the British Occupations of Minorca between 1708 and 1802* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990).

[20] G. T. Garratt, *Gibraltar and the Mediterranean* (Coward-McCann, 1939); Ernle Bradford, *Gibraltar: the history of a fortress* (London: Hart-Davis, 1971); Sir William Jackson, *The Rock of the Gibraltarians* (Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1987); Allen Andrews, *Proud Fortress: the fighting story of Gibraltar* (Dutton, 1959); George Hills, *Rock of Contention: A history of Gibraltar* (Hale, 1974).

eration. In the 1790s they would seize the opportunity to actively participate in the turbulent Mediterranean diplomatic and military sphere, with mixed results.

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If the pre-Revolutionary Western Mediterranean was marked by various degrees of neutrality and marginalization, what then caused its unsettling? On one hand, the simple answer is the French Revolution. The radicalization of French foreign policy will, as we shall shortly see, create the context necessary for the established forms of interaction to change. Still, on a deeper level this destabilization has its roots in the global politics of the latter half of the eighteenth century. Following the Seven Years War, Britain was ascendant, but spread thin, while France sought to reassert its place within the balance of power. Corsica was a small example of this, but if Corsica was costly for the French, the War of American Independence was far more so. For the French, their involvement in America was predicated on three assumptions.[21] The first was that a French victory would restore the balance of power between France and Britain that had been upset following the Seven Years War, and to an extent following the alliance with Austria in 1756. For the Vergennes, the Foreign Minister, this maintenance of the balance of power was of paramount importance.

The second assumption, however, was that the French navy would not attempt to upset the balance further themselves and avoid severe repercussions from the other powers. Indeed, one of the aims of restoring the balance of power was the possibility of Britain joining with the French against the growing presence of the Eastern powers, especially Catherine the Great in Russia. Finally, Vergennes assumed that the French could realistically implement the military buildup necessary for success without fatally undermining the social and political institutions at home.[22] All of these assumptions were ultimately incorrect and, either directly or indirectly, contributed to the outbreak of the French Revolution.

In the short term, however, Vergennes saw victory over the British as restoring the balance of power and from there he moved to secure the friendship of Britain to ensure France's continental interests in what he saw as the next theater of conflict—the East. The result of this was the Eden Treaty in 1786, which promoted Anglo-French free trade and an

[21] Credit for this framework goes to Bailey Stone, *Reinterpreting the French Revolution: A Global-Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[22] Stone, 114.

acceptance of each other as "most favored nations."[23] Even though this may have been in line with Vergennes's overall strategy, and indeed the foreign minister viewed it as necessary to allow a financial recovery following the expenditures in aid for America, the majority of public opinion in France was solidly against the treaty, with good reason.[24] France was clearly behind Britain in terms of trade development, therefore this treaty would serve much more to the benefit of King George than to King Louis.

This was evident not only to the French but also to the British. Prime Minister William Pitt focused his policy following the War of American Independence toward developing commerce in such a way as to promote peace and harmony at a low cost without forcing Britain to defend the territories or interests of other states. Although France remained their chief rival, especially in the view of the foreign minister, Carmarthen, Pitt recognized that the traditional balance of power achieved by defensive alliances was antiquated. Though Carmarthen still pushed for strong defensive alliances against the Bourbons, the shift in foreign policy away from military and toward commercial priorities gave Britain a definite advantage leading into the 1790s.[25]

As the French state dealt with crisis after crisis in the last years of the Old Regime and the first years of the Revolution, Pitt was content to let France implode on itself while England prospered. A weak Bourbon France was not, to Pitt, an inherently negative prospect. However, this lack of action regarding the Revolution that so vexed Edmund Burke was predicated on the French implosion remaining rational and reasonable on an international stage.[26] Assuming a settled, agreed-on conception of sovereignty and statecraft, the French Revolution was a boon to

[23] J. Ehrman, *The British Government and Commercial Negotiations with Europe, 1783–1793* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962).

[24] Orville T. Murphy, *The Diplomatic Retreat of France and Public Opinion on the Eve of the French Revolution, 1783–1789* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998).

[25] J. Black, *Debating Foreign Policy*; Jennifer Mori, *Britain in the Age of the French Revolution*; John C. Clarke, *British Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, 1782–1865;* Linda Colley, *Britons, Forging the Nation*. C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830* (Reading, MA: Longman, 1989); Charles Middleton, *The Administration of British Foreign Policy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1977), 21–23; D. B. Horn, *Great Britain and Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 378–379.

[26] Mori, 15. There is a considerable body of work on Burke and his relationship with the French Revolution, including David Armitage, "Edmund Burke and Reason of State,"

Britain. Unfortunately, or perhaps inevitably, the French Revolution did not remain contained within its own borders. Even though it took several years to fully develop, the Revolutionary perspective on international politics burst out of the borders of France with a style and vigor that took Britain by surprise.

Revolutionary diplomacy was an overt attack on Old Regime diplomatic practices and precedents. The alliance with the Austrians, the failure of the French in the Seven Years War, the Eden Treaty, and finally the failure of the French to give promised aid to the Netherlands all led the Revolutionaries to the conclusion that a complete reset was necessary. They blamed the fall of the French state from its place of international prestige at least in part to the failure of the diplomatic corps. Nonetheless, it was not just the individuals who had failed—it was the entire system. Replete with secrecy and aristocratic privilege, the old form of diplomacy was in desperate need of reform, possibly even abolition.[27]

The problem the Revolutionaries faced, however, was one of how to reimagine the international arena in a Revolutionary way, while also maintaining or increasing the effectiveness of their diplomats and representatives. To put it another way, how were the Revolutionaries to increase the prestige and *la gloire* of France abroad while at the same time maintaining the tenants of the Revolution? Although the association of diplomatic practice with the pomp of the aristocracy was certainly damning in the eyes of the Revolutionaries, of equal weight was the unmitigated failure of diplomacy to better France's stature throughout the eighteenth century.

Jérôme Pétion de Villeneuve wrote in a 1790 *Moniteur* article that he found it difficult to believe that "if the nation had exercised its rights, it would have been such an enemy of itself to squander its blood and its treasure in order to subscribe to humiliating treaties. Contemplate all these treaties or these political forfeits, and you will see each page dyed with the blood that the people have shed."[28] Others looked forward to a day when diplomacy would become altogether unnecessary, arguing that

Journal of the History of Ideas, 61, no. 4 (2000) 617–634; Jennifer Pitt, *A Turn to Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[27] Linda and Marsha Frey, "The Reign of the Charlatans Is Over: The French Revolutionary Attack on Diplomatic Practice," *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 65, no. 4 (Dec. 1993), 706–744; Philippe Joseph Benjamin Buchez and Prosper Charles Roux, eds., *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française* (Paris, 1834), 6:65, Goupil de Prefeln, May 27, 1790.

[28] *Moniteur* 4 (1790), 389–91.

"the diplomacy of commerce" would replace all other forms.[29] According to the journalist Louis Marie Prudhomme, the modern envoy was no more than a spy, a glib, ambitious intriguer who reveled in outward luxury and show.[30]

For Pétion, a radical member of the Assembly who was elected President in December 1790, the problem lay in the secrecy of kings and their representatives. "France would no longer be governed by the guile of cabinets nor by the *mystères diplomatiques*."[31] Nevertheless, no immediate solution to the problem of how to practically achieve their foreign policy goals presented itself. Although some argued for doing away with diplomacy and diplomats, there was still a need to interact with other states, sometimes for critical purposes (e.g., ensuring a supply of grain). For this reason, the diplomatic corps was in actuality slow to reform. Up through 1792 there were complaints that the Foreign Ministry was too much under the sway of the king, and even beyond then there remained a significant number of Old Regime diplomats employed by the Revolution. In 1791 they were made to swear an oath of loyalty to the Revolution, but even though this weeded out several high-level diplomats, there remained many who were not paragons of Revolutionary ideology, but were quite effective at their posts.[32]

Therefore, in the Age of Revolutions there were two main factors destabilizing and unsettling the conceptual and political borders between states. The first was a slow shift away from defensive pacts toward a view of international policy dictated by commercial and imperial interests. The French Revolution and the subsequent formation of a European defensive pact via the First Coalition served to interrupt and challenge that shift, especially for the British. The balance between the needs of the allies and the desires of Britain was not necessarily a new dynamic in and of itself; in many ways, this was a continuation of the balance of power present throughout the eighteenth century, if a regression to an earlier form.

[29] Felix Gilbert, "The 'New Diplomacy' of the Eighteenth Century," *World Politics*, 4, no. 1 (Oct. 1951), quoted on page 36.

[30] Louis Marie Prudhomme, *Révolutions de Paris*, no. 92 (Paris, 16 April 1791)

[31] Rabaud in *Archives Parlementaires de 1787–1860: Recueil Complet des Débats Législatifs et Politiques des Chambres Françaises, Première Sérié (1787–1799)* (Paris, 1878), 17:396, 28 July 1790.

[32] Linda and Marsha Frey, "'Courtesans of the King': Diplomats and the French Revolution," *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History*, vol. 32, 2004; http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.0642292.0032.007.

The challenge occurred with the introduction of the second factor: the radicalization of diplomacy and foreign policy by the French Revolution. Reacting to this radicalization forced the British to orient themselves not simply as a participant in the arena of international politics via commerce, but as arbiter and defender, especially of the minor powers. In this role, they struggled and ultimately failed to find a middle ground between protecting the old order and promoting a new vision for international politics. On the other side, however, the French representatives in the Mediterranean also largely failed to convince or pressure with their radical agenda, necessitating an adaptation of rhetoric from Paris to practice in the periphery. To illustrate this tension between the radical and the practical, we first turn to the Italian Peninsula in the early years of the Revolution.[33]

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Tuscan neutrality was perhaps the most carefully constructed of the Italian states in the late eighteenth century, especially after Grand Duke Leopold passed the principle of neutrality officially into law in 1778. The motivation behind this codification of neutrality lay in the free port of *Livorno* (Leghorn in English). This port was the center of the Tuscan economy and open to all nations, but it was quite susceptible to blockade. It was imperative that even in times of war in Europe, Livorno remain untouched and outside the conflict. The main neutrality theorist in Tuscany was Giovanni Maria Lampredi, a lifelong jurist who became the foremost expert on neutrality in the context of international law within Italy, and he was almost singlehandedly responsible for drafting the Tuscan neutral policy.[34] He was concerned with "active commerce," or deliberately trading with a belligerent power, or participating in the commercial activity of a state at war.

Lampredi suggested that there was an alternative for the neutral state that wished to trade but did not wish to jeopardize its neutrality: "passive commerce." The responsibility of the neutral power in time of war was not

[33] See Pasquale Villani, "*Francois Cacault decano dei diplomatici francesi in Italia durante la rivoluzione*," *Studi Storici*, anno 42, no. 2 (Apr.–Jun. 2001), pp. 461–501; Villani, "*Agenti e diplomatici francesi durante la rivoluzione. Eymar e la sua missione a Genova* (1793)" *Studi Storic*, 36, no. 4 (Oct.–Dec. 1995), 957–975 .

[34] Richard Long, "The Relations of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany with Revolutionary France, 1790–1799," Florida State University Dissertation, 1972; Giovanni Lampredi, *Juris Publici Universalis sive Juris Naturae et Gentium*, Livorno (1776–1778)

to refrain from trade with any state, even belligerents, but to avoid trade in goods clearly intended for the purpose of waging war. This included items such as weapons, horses, ships, or those things "which, by their very nature, are understood to be forbidden to a Neutral and are commonly called *contrabando di Guerra*."[35] Passive commerce still allowed for trade in items of supply (e.g., grain or naval stores). The presumption was that if Livorno were open without partiality in terms of passive commerce, there would be no cause for intervention or interruption of neutrality. Tuscany thus attempted to remain relevant while also remaining on the periphery.

This policy of neutrality would be a source of considerable tension in the coming years because Tuscany became a key area of conflict between Britain and France as they faced off against each other in the Revolutionary Mediterranean. The key figure in the British side of this fight was Lord John Augustus Hervey.[36] Constantly in debt, Hervey had held many government positions in his life (e.g., a marine official, British agent to the Kingdom of Naples and finally to Tuscany. Although a competent diplomat, he struggled to deal with the shifting diplomatic landscape brought about by the French Revolution. In Tuscany, he developed a penchant for blowing small issues into much larger problems, often annoying the Grand Duke's officials with petty problems such as an Irish captain who tried to sue him for an unpaid debt, or a private argument over noisy neighbors at a house he rented near the Pianna Santa Croce.[37] Of perhaps more importance, however, was his almost violent dislike of the French, an opinion that was only exacerbated by paranoia of the French Revolution spreading to the Italian states.[38]

With the coming of the French Revolution also came a period of crisis in Tuscany, but for unrelated reasons. The Austrian Emperor Joseph II had died and his brother Peter Leopold, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, was called to Vienna in 1790 to replace him. Tuscany operated under a

[35] Lampredi, *Del Commercio dei Popoli in Tempo di Guerra* (Florence, 1788), I, 26–27, 28ff, 38–39.

[36] BNA FO 528 are the Hervey papers with much of his correspondence, both official and personal.

[37] BNA FO 528/21 contains the papers concerning "Nugent, the Irish Madman." FO 528/17 contains the letters concerning Hervey's court case against his noisy neighbors.

[38] See example in BNA FO 528/5 of Hervey smoothing over a contentious situation involving John Udney, consul in Livorno, and a breach of neutral etiquette. Hervey was commended for his efforts in this situation by Grenville. See BNA FO 528/1, Grenville to Hervey, 22 November 1791.

second geniture system after the Treaty of Vienna in 1738, meaning that the second son of the house of Habsburg-Lorraine would become the Grand Duke. While Francis, Leopold's heir, traveled to Vienna with his father, Leopold's second son Ferdinand became the Grand Duke. The problem arose from the fact that it took until April 1791 for Ferdinand to be crowned.[39] A Council of Regency governed Tuscany during this period, but there was a great deal of uncertainty regarding the fate of certain reforms that had taken place in the previous years of Enlightened inspiration, especially religious reforms. There was even talk of Leopold annexing Tuscany to the Holy Roman Empire, although Leopold was quick to assure Britain and France otherwise.[40] The fear of this, however, and a reaction both for and against some of Leopold's reforms and the actions of the Council of Regency, resulted in some rioting and general disturbances. These were unrelated to the French Revolution, though they shared some similar roots and were close enough in proximity and timing to give cause for concern for the long-held tradition of Tuscan neutrality.

The uncertainty of succession led to the Marquis Federigo Manfredini, the Major Domo and chief advisor to the Grand Duke, to question Hervey about the possibility of an alliance with Great Britain.[41] The British were the chief commercial force in the free port of Livorno, theoretically giving them the keenest interest in Tuscan neutrality. Ultimately, however, peace was restored and Tuscany remained neutral and settled on the periphery. Neither the general populace, nor the aristocracy, nor the incumbent Grand Duke had any serious desire to have closer relations with the major continental powers, especially not in the time of turbulence that was the early 1790s. Although there was a familial connection to Austria and a commercial connection to Britain, in reality Tuscany steadily increased in independence and isolation as the eighteenth century progressed. This would soon end however, as the turn to Lord Hervey for potential aid had dire consequences.

In 1790, Hervey requested and received a promotion to Minister Plenipotentiary in order to place him "on an equal footing with the

[39] Niccolo Rodolico, *Le Reggenza Lorenese in Toscano* (Prato, 1908); Giuseppe Conti, *Firenze Dopo i Medici: Francesco di Lorena, Pietro Leopoldo, Inizio del Regno di Ferdinando III* (Florence, 1921).

[40] BNA, FO 79/6, Hervey to Leeds, 28 February 1790; 20 March 1790.

[41] Ibid., 2 February, 1790.

Spanish, French, and Russian Ministers."[42] He would not have received this promotion were he entirely incompetent, and indeed there were several examples of exemplary diplomatic work for which he was commended. Nevertheless, these incidents, such as one where a British sea captain unwittingly breached the decorum of Tuscan neutrality by bringing armed soldiers on land as guards, were mostly confined to relations strictly between Britain and Tuscany. When Hervey interacted with Tuscany as a representative of Britain in opposition to France, he consistently overplayed his hand.

As early as September 9, 1789, he reported the following concerning one of the traditional Florentine festivals:

> Last night there were two sets of gentlemen who formed themselves into clubs. … Those of the procession were dressed in fancy dresses, but they had adopted the French liberty cockade, Red, Blue and White. … After a certain time many of the lower classes grew riotous, and more than once I was witness to them ordering the carriages to leave the street and then telling the inside passengers to get out and walk as they did.[43]

A few months later Minister Plenipotentiary Hervey observed: "The spirit of revolt gains ground in these countries, and it requires little to set it ablaze."[44] As for the aristocrats, Hervey wrote: "The nobility, though quiet from a certain degree of effeminacy and indolence, are not well inclined to the house of Austria. A spark of Republicanism thrown amongst them would kindle a flame which will cost many lives and much money to extinguish."[45]

Despite Hervey's continued warnings, Tuscany did not conflagrate. There was an element of the population that sought reform or even sympathized with the Revolution, but a more accurate motivation for most disturbances lay in the tension surrounding the succession crisis and the status of reforms that predated the Revolution.[46] Hervey's perception

[42] Elizabeth, Lady Holland, *Journal of Elizabeth Lady Holland, 1791–1811,* ed. Earl of Ilchester (London, 1909), I, 55.

[43] BNA FO 79/6, Hervey to Leeds, 8 September 1789.

[44] Ibid., Hervey to Leeds, 20 October 1789.

[45] Ibid., 15 June, 1790.

[46] It was the opinion of Francesco Maria Gianni in "*Memoria sul tumlto*" (211–224) that the reactions of 1790 were basically reactions against the economy reforms. Many sources including Eric Cochrane, *Tradition and Enlightenment* (Chicago: University of Chicago

of the influence of France on Tuscany likely came in part from his distaste for the French *chargé d'affaires*, Alexandre-Joseph-Marie Fauvet de La Flotte**.** His hatred of La Flotte, who was promoted to Minister from chargé d'affaires in January 1793, may have transcended political differences, as one historian believed they might have had a disagreement over a woman.[47] More substantively, however, La Flotte was particularly close to Major Domo Marquis Manfredini, a position that Hervey both coveted for himself and feared for the impact La Flotte could have on Manfredini, and by extension the Grand Duke.

La Flotte, however, was not a particularly revolutionary example of a diplomat. Comte de Montmorin, who was the foreign minister to Louis XVI up through the King's flight to Varennes, appointed him. Montmorin was later denounced, imprisoned, and then killed in the September Massacres of 1792.[48] This association caused suspicion of the diplomats back in Paris where, in 1793, La Flotte was accused of being "a creature of Montmorin." Beyond that, his radical detractors also accused him of not wearing his cockade, fraternizing with aristocrats and émigrés, and overall failing to promote Revolutionary ideals. These accusations likely had a basis in reality, but La Flotte was able to maintain his position through most of 1793 because he had not done anything to overtly cause the Revolutionary government to doubt his value.[49]

This principle of allowing La Flotte leeway based on his practical value is most accurately demonstrated by a crisis that would also accentuate the difficulty Lord Hervey, and by extension Britain, experienced in regard to the radicalization of French diplomatic policy. The crisis started in Naples, but soon spread across the Italian Peninsula. On August 24, 1792, Ferdinand IV, the King of Naples, refused to receive the French representative Armand Mackau.[50] This was in part because of the mistreatment of the French Royal family, but also in part because Naples saw the

Press, 1961) have questioned in light of contemporary observers who stressed the religious aspects of the rebellion.

[47] Zobi, *Storia civile della Toscana,* III, 84. See also BNA FO 528/10, Manfredini to Hervey, 22 June 1793.

[48] Ministre Affaire Etrangers (hereafter MAE), Mémoires et documents, XI, *Italie: Dépêches et Mémoires, 1494–1793*, Unsigned report, July 1793, 238; MAE, Corr. Polit. 145bis, Toscane, La Flotte to Lebrun-Tondu, 4 January 1793.

[49] Pasquale Villani, "*Francois Cacault decano dei diplomatici francesi in Italia durante la rivoluzione*," *Studi Storici*, Anno 42, No. 2, 2002, 461–501.

[50] MAE, Corr. Polit. (Naples) 38 (1793–1805), 11, 29 January 1793.

French Revolution as the greatest threat to their autonomy. As such, they were willing to eschew their place on the periphery and take a firm stand against the spread of Revolutionary doctrine.

The French invasion of Nice and Savoy in September of 1792, starting a war with Piedmont-Sardinia that would last until 1796, seemed to vindicate the Neapolitans reaction against the Revolution. Following this, the Neapolitan government similarly urged Genoa to refuse to receive Hugo de Semonville, the appointed French representative there. Semonville had nearly been appointed the Minister Plenipotentiary for the entire Italian Peninsula. This would have been highly unpalatable, as the Neapolitans described him as "a man so notorious for the perversity of his principles that several courts have already refused him as their ambassador." They went on to note how "the execrable projects of this emissary, known to the imperial and royal courts, tend to nothing less than to destroy perfect harmony."[51] Semonville eventually was appointed as the representative to the Ottoman court, though he never traveled to assume his post; instead he wandered around the Mediterranean, appearing at various flashpoints as a voice of the radical Revolution.

Following these diplomatic insults, a French fleet under Admiral La Touche-Treville sailed into the Tyrrhenian Sea. The progress of the fleet created a great deal of apprehension along the western coastline of the Italian Peninsula, including from the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, but Touche-Treville sailed directly to the Bay of Naples.[52] This was supposedly a courtesy visit, but the result was that the government in Naples capitulated and recognized French representative Mackau. This added element of force to the growing radicalism of Revolutionary diplomacy sparked both fear as well as varying modes resistance. In late January 1793, when the French vice-consul replaced the Bourbon family emblems with the new Republican insignia, unknown persons smeared the insignia with filth.[53]

Although this incident passed by without further escalation, the next domino in the chain had already fallen. Along with La Trouche-Treville came Hugo de Basseville, a Secretary of Legation known for his

[51] Annual Register, Volume 34, 325.

[52] See Niccolo Niccolini, *La Spedizione Punitiva di La Touche-Treville ed Altri Saffi Sulla Politica Napoletana alla Fine del Secolo XVIII* (Florence, 1937), and Francois A. Aulard, ed, *Recuel des Actes du Comite de Salut Public avec la Correspondance Officielle des Représentât en Mission et la Registre du Conseil Exécutif Provisoire (*Paris, 1891–1910), I, 19ff, 42, 165–168, 188–190.

[53] MAE, Corr. Polit. (Naples) 38 (1793–1805), 11, 29 January 1793.

Revolutionary fervor. Like Mackau and Semonville, he was a propagandist, "conceited, ignorant and hot-headed, chosen for the fervor of his republican protestations rather than his fitness for the task."[54] His diplomatic mission sent him to Rome on a with a mandate of reopening diplomatic relations that the seizure of Church property had severed. His form of diplomacy, however, was not to the liking of the Roman court, though it was exactly in line with the rhetoric and expectations from Paris.

In spite of the objections raised by the Quirinal, Basseville revolutionized the French Academy and turned it into a center for Republican propaganda. He began to remove the French Royal arms from the French-owned buildings in Rome and replace them with Republican insignia. Whenever he left the Embassy, he prominently displayed the cockade on his coach or on his person. On January 13, 1793, the rage at his actions overwhelmed the fear of reprisals, at least for a crowd he was passing. His carriage was assaulted with stones, and after retaliation by his servants, a riotous mob formed; it dragged Basseville out of his carriage and beat him to death.[55] The Papacy denied both complicity in the affair and compensation for Basseville's death. In France, pamphleteers began to denounce the incident as a conspiracy personally engineered by the Pope.[56]

To return to Tuscany, this situation widened the rift between the British and the French in Tuscany. It was clear by now that France and Britain would soon go to war, and while Tuscany continually asserted her desire to remain neutral, Hervey's doubts increased as he suspected La Flotte of wielding unneutral influence over Manfredini. Famine in southern France caused more suspicions, as La Flotte began to request permission to export Tuscan grain to France. This would normally fall under the banner of "passive commerce" and not be an issue, but the Grand Duke had recently refused a similar request from Naples. Despite this, the Grand Duke granted La Flotte's request, much to Hervey's chagrin.[57] The news of Basseville's assassination precipitated a further request by La Flotte, this time concerning the possibility of French troops passing through Tuscany toward Rome. Initially, Manfredini reminded La Flotte of the 1778 law of

[54] Angus Heriot, *The French in Italy* (Chatto & Windus, 1957), 83.

[55] See Frederic Masson, *Les Diplômâtes de la Révolution: Hugo de Basseville à Rome, Bernadotte à Vienne* (Paris, 1877), 15–145.

[56] Interestingly, one of the stipulations of the Treaty of Tolentino in 1797 was provision for Basseville's family.

[57] BNA FO 79/8, Hervey to Grenville, 10 March, 1793. The draft of this letter is in BNA FO 528/4.

neutrality. La Flotte continued to press for a definite answer, however, and on February 22 he received one.

The government noted that the question was rhetorical and expressed disbelief that France would ever make such a demand in light of Tuscany's strict adherence to neutrality. Nevertheless, should France insist, the Grand Duchy had neither the force to prevent it nor "the inclination to incur the misfortunes which a denial would surely produce."[58] This recognition of the military situation in the Mediterranean explains the deference of the Grand Duke to the French. Although ideally Tuscany would avoid involvement in any such dispute, realistically Manfredini, the Grand Duke, and especially La Flotte recognized the fact that the British and even Austrians were unable to provide assistance at the time.

Despite these practical concerns, this response frustrated Hervey who expected a friendly relationship between Britain and Tuscany. La Flotte, meanwhile, was pleased enough to remark that he believed Tuscany was favorably inclined toward France.[59] Manfredini even offered to carry the communications between La Flotte and Mackau in the Tuscan diplomatic pouch, because passage through Rome for the French was impossible following the Basseville incident. Tuscany also offered to arbitrate a peaceful solution between Rome and France.[60] This offer was a reinforcement of the principle of neutrality and made with a hope for peace, but it was also a message to Rome that Tuscany would not take the fall for the incendiary actions of the Papal State. Indeed, as relations between France and Britain grew worse and war was imminent, and then declared, there was a push among the Italian states to form a coalition dedicated to protecting their neutrality; however, this failed in large part because of Tuscany's unwillingness to participate.[61] The Tuscans assumed, and probably rightly so, that such a league only would result in their being dragged into a conflict that they had thus far avoided.

In some ways, this was a miscalculation by Manfredini and Tuscany. The assumption was that they could show preference to France without fear

[58] MAE, Corr. Polit, Toscane, 145bis, Toscane, Lebrun Tondu to La Flotte, 5 February 1973, 22 February 1793. Also, BNA FO 528/3, Hervey to Greenville, 9 November 1792.

[59] MAE, Corr. Polit, Toscane, 145bis, Toscane, Lebrun Tondu to La Flotte, 2 April 1793.

[60] On the offer of use of the diplomatic pouch, see MAE, Corr. Polit, Toscane, 145bis, Toscane, La Flotte to Lebrun-Tondu, 6 February, 1793. On the offer of arbitration, see ibid., Manfredini to La Flotte, 18 February 1793.

[61] See Giusseppe Nuzzo, *Italia e Rivoluzione Francese, la Resistenza dei Princip, 1791–1796* (Naples, 1965), 24, 73.

of alienating Austria and, more important for the Western Mediterranean, Britain. The French were clearly willing to exert heavy-handed pressure on the Italian states, as evidenced in Rome and Naples, while the British had established themselves as concerned more with commerce. A neutral Tuscany ensured that Livorno would remain open, although interference from Britain would likely lead to French intervention. The Grand Duke and Manfredini assumed that if Britain was chiefly interested in commerce, then it would act to defend Tuscan neutrality, but not violate it.

In one way, this assumption was correct. Britain was struggling with how to react to the Revolution in 1791 and 1792, and the perspective from London was still to err on the side of preserving commercial dominance and to avoid traditional defensive pacts. Even after Britain and France declared war in February of 1793, it remained unclear to what extent this was a fight against France and to what extent it was a fight against the Revolution. In the case of the former, Tuscany remained valuable as a neutral on the periphery of international politics. In the case of the latter, Great Britain or Austria needed to protect Tuscany from the radical, belligerent foreign policy of the Revolution that threatened the periphery and center alike.

This tension would not be resolved until late 1793 and the occupation of Toulon. In the meantime, Tuscany acted on the assumption that Britain would act in a similar fashion to the Corsican situation 20 years earlier: express discontent, but fail to intervene forcefully. This was a severe miscalculation with long-reaching effects. By the end of 1793, Minister Plenipotentiary Hervey ignored direct orders from London and extorted an alliance between Tuscany and Great Britain at cannon point. This event will be examined in more detail in subsequent chapters, but in the context of the broader eighteenth-century Mediterranean political dynamic, Manfredini's miscalculation is perhaps understandable.

Indeed, the opinion in London overall was still reticent to disrupt the Mediterranean consensus. Nevertheless, while Pitt and his administration may have struggled to come to grips with the impact of the Revolution on foreign policy in the Mediterranean, Hervey had a well-established opinion in which he placed himself opposed to the French Revolution and in support of British commercial interests.[62] Even though he was willing to acknowledge that the preferential treatment of France by Manfredini and the Grand Duke may have been as a result of fear of France, he was not

[62] BNA, FO 79/8, Hervey to Grenville, 10 March 1793.

willing to allow Tuscany to fall under the sway of the French Revolution and risk Great Britain losing access to Livorno. By reacting against the Revolution, Hervey actually served to subvert the traditional order of international affairs by forcing Tuscany to choose a side, something La Flotte never asked. Tuscany, along with the broader Western Mediterranean, now became a disputed borderland between the political forces of Britain and France, and between Revolution and Counter-Revolution.

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From the middle of the eighteenth century looking backward, the Western Mediterranean seemed remarkably settled, with the major powers of Europe establishing relatively firm control over the structure of the international political sphere. The French acquisition of Corsica in 1769 showed that the region was still capable of change and was not entirely stagnant, but also it demonstrated adherence to traditional balance-of-power politics in the region. There remained areas of turbulence, but the ways in which states were structured and how they interacted with each other was stable. The Age of Revolution put this view of the Mediterranean to the test, first with the War of American Independence and then more fully with the French Revolution. These destabilizing forces created diverse and opposed conceptions of the state within Europe, revealing a new array of fault lines and borders.

As Britain, France, and the Mediterranean powers explored new forms of interaction, they did so without a clearly defined vision for the shape of the state in an international context. The British struggled to adapt their commercial conception of international politics to the vagaries of the French Revolution. France meanwhile had no clear practical basis for the radicalization of their foreign policy and were forced to deal simultaneously with issues (e.g., famine) and, as the next chapter discusses, Counter-Revolution. Finally, Tuscany and the Italian States became battlegrounds where statesmen from both Britain and France negotiated and fought for control. From the view of Hervey, Manfredini, and La Flotte in 1793, the Western Mediterranean was a volatile region, open for negotiation and ripe for conflict during the future of the state.

CHAPTER 3

Revolutionary Corsica, 1789–1793

From the National Assembly to the Court of Tuscany, the French Revolution emerged as a radical destabilizing force, both by intent and by perception. This destabilization, however, did not take place in a vacuum, but rather through conversation within the local exigencies that stretched for decades and in some cases centuries before. The Revolutionary attack on the European balance-of power-system was a starting point, but the intended or perceived endpoint of this attack was constantly in flux depending on local concerns. As a result of this plurality of perspectives, the Revolution itself became a negotiated force or symbol, especially in the Western Mediterranean. Here on the margins of European society, the vision from Paris became increasingly blurry and contested as the Revolution remained in flux.

This is especially the case in Corsica, which was nominally part of France and indeed part of the Revolution, but also it remained a distinct entity within the context of the Mediterranean. Although not officially recognized as a separate state by other powers, the French Revolution provided the necessary subversion concerning the legitimate expression of sovereignty to allow Corsica to participate in the discussion surrounding international politics, regardless of its official status.[1] The Corsican state had its

[1] There is a small amount of literature concerning Corsica during the Revolutionary period. Desmond Gregory's *The Ungovernable Rock* (Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1985) is essential, as is J.M.P. McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo Di Borgo in*

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roots in a well-defined and developed identity on the island, highlighted to an extent in the previous chapter in the context of France effectively colonizing the island in 1769. In 1789, however, the Revolution provided the space for this identity to exert itself, and a language for it to use.

The key Corsican figures of Cristoforo Saliceti, Pasquale Paoli, and the Bonaparte and Arena families were quick to combine Revolutionary terminology and rhetoric with the goals and ambitions of the Corsican people, stretching back centuries through their exploitation by the Genoese. Although Corsicans may have used terms (e.g., Jacobin, Federalist, and Counter-Revolutionary) in the context of Corsica, internal concerns motivated the politics of the island, not broad Revolutionary themes. The imposition of the ideas of "liberty, equality and fraternity" had two very different meanings in the Parisian center and the Corsican periphery. This led to confused and unsuccessful attempts at spreading the Revolution both within Corsica and from Corsica to the rest of the Mediterranean. Corsica was not simply a receptacle for the foreign policy directives dreamed up in Paris, but instead various groups within Corsica pushed back in pursuit of their own objectives.

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From the time that Corsica came under French rule in 1769, there was little consideration given to the island other than as necessary to keep any other power from gaining a port so close to France. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the acquisition of Corsica from Genoa stemmed mainly from an attempt to prevent the English, Spanish, or even Russians from establishing a Mediterranean base near the French southern coastline. Napoleon would later refer to Corsica as "a nuisance to France, but there she is, like a wen on her nose…," but nonetheless there was little choice but for Old Regime (and indeed Napoleonic) France to control the

Corsica and after, 1764–1821: Not quite a vendetta (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), which provides an excellent account of the history of the island through the lens of two of its most famous sons. In French, Antoine Casanova's *Peuple Corse, Révolutions Et Nation Française* (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1979) is invaluable, if dated, as well as his article "Caractères originaux et cheminements de la Révolution en Corse," *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française* 260 (1985): 140–172. The oeuvre of Francois Pomponi is also essential, especially for a more complete picture of Corsican history. The Anglo-Corsican Kingdom, the focus of later chapters, is covered by several monographs and articles as well, perhaps most notably in the short article by R. R. Palmer, "The Kingdom of Corsica and the science of history," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, (August 1961): 345–360; as well as several other articles inspired by Palmer's interest.

island.[2] After purchasing Corsica from the Genoese, the French expended no small amount of effort to pacify and even integrate the island into France. Although the view from Paris was that this was a good investment in terms of the balance of power, Corsica offered little economically in return and had a long history of insurrection and instability.

To achieve pacification, the French governor of the island revised the criminal justice system, forbade civilians to carry arms, and outlawed the vendetta. On a more positive level, French governance did much to improve the infrastructure of the island, constructing roads and schools, improving ports and harbors, and providing agricultural subsidies in an effort to make Corsica self-sustaining. Even with all of the improvements, taxes remained low. The Corsican nobility was recognized and, in perhaps the most well-known integrating tactic employed, noble children were given places at prestigious French schools—including a certain Napoleone Buonaparte.[3]

Despite all of this, many Corsicans resented French rule. The forbidding of arms made many of them feel as though the French were foreign occupiers just as the Genoese had been. The fact that the vast majority of Corsicans did not speak any French only exacerbated this resentment. The disconnect went beyond the rural villages to the extent that Joseph Bonaparte claimed to be the only French-speaking member of the Ajaccio municipal council.[4] A few of the nobility were ardently pro-French, such as Matteo de Buttafoco and Francois de Gaffori who had both been pro-French since before the annexation of 1769, and were well rewarded for their loyalty; for example, Buttafoco even urged Choiseul to annex the island in 1762. Nonetheless, for the most part, even among families who took advantage of French policies (e.g., the Bonapartes), there was resistance. Napoleon wrote fervently in his youth about retaking Corsica from

[2] Quoted in Louis Villat, *La Corse de 1768–1789* (Besançon, 1924–1925), 228–233. The full quote, from a letter from Napoleon to Bertrand, is as follows: "Corsica is a nuisance to France, but there she is, like a wen on her nose. The port of St. Florent is on the doorstep of Toulon; if France does not occupy it, the English will. M. de Choiseul once said that if Corsica could be pushed under the sea with a trident, it should be done. He was quite right; it's nothing but a nuisance." See also McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, 23, and the various works by Thadd. E. Hall.

[3] Louis Villat, *Histoire de Corse* (Bolvin & C, 1916), 231–242; Thadd E. Hall, "Enlightened Thought and Practice in Corsica," *American Historical Review* 74, no. 3 (1969): 880–905. Interestingly, this is nearly a perfect copy of Rousseau's plan for the island in his Constitutional Project for Corsica.

[4] McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, 26.

the French, a sentiment that many of his generation shared.[5] The attempts to "Frenchify" the island in the waning years of the Old Regime largely failed, and in fact opened avenues for resistance that would be exploited during the Revolution.

The real source of the dissatisfaction, however, was not with France in the abstract, but more specifically with the local administration of the island. Many of the administrators were corrupt and took advantage of the isolated nature of Corsica. From 1769 until 1773, the Army had administered the island with little issue, but after 1773 control passed to the Treasury and Joseph Marie Terray took charge of the island.[6] Under his administration, Corsica under the French began to look exactly like Corsica under the Genoese, with French administrators pocketing much of the money designated for Corsican subsidies, and a large crowd of French "carpetbaggers" descended on the island. This "swarm of locusts" made many Corsicans think wistfully of Paoli, off in exile in England.[7] There were virtually no opportunities for young Corsicans in Corsica, and for all but the very few, making their way into France was not an option. Not only was there misadministration, there was also a lack of clarity about Corsica's place as part of France and continual consternation that France might have plans to sell Corsica back to the Genoese. Although there is no evidence that the French ever seriously discussed this, it certainly was part of the provision of the treaty with Genoa, and neither the administration on the island nor the overlords in Paris did much to allay the fears of the Corsicans.[8]

Thus, while under the Old Regime there were some attempts at Enlightened despotism and state-building on the island, by the time the Assembly of Notables was called in 1787 Corsica had its own extensive list of complaints. Before these could even begin to be addressed, however, Corsica needed to be invited to participate in the Assembly—in 1787 no

[5] Ibid. For Napoleon's own words, see Napoléon Bonaparte, "*Sur Corse*," in *Napoléon inconnu; papiers inédits (1786–1793) pub. par Frédéric Masson et Guido Biagi, accompagnés de notes sur la jeunesse de Napoléon (1769–1793)* ed. Frédéric Masson, (Paris: 1895): 141–145.

[6] Villat, *Histoire de Corse*, pp. 243–44 and *La Corse*, II, 349–350; Rovere Ange, "*La Corse et le despotisme éclairé*, " *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, no. 260 (1985): 189–214; Dorothy Carrington, "*Sur les inégalités sociales en Corse rurale au XVIIIe siècle*, " *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, no. 260 (1985): 173–188.

[7] On this, see Arthur Chuquet, *Le Jeunesse de Napoléon*, III (Paris: A. Colin, 1897–1899), 30–31.

[8] Rene Emmanuelli, *L'Equivoque de Corse, 1768–1805* (Ajaccio: La Marge, 1989); Maurice Jollivet, *La Révolution française en Corse* (Paris, 1892).

such invitation was forthcoming. The nobility decided to send a petition to Versailles in 1788. Significantly, the main complaints of this document were directed toward the local government, not France itself. This was not a document of rebellion against the French, but rather a plea for unity and integration, espousing hope and excitement for the future. The Corsicans further evinced this enthusiasm and optimism by sending deputies to Paris prior to the Assembly granting them seats. This was done with typical Corsican divisiveness. Two sets of deputies were sent, one contesting the elections of the other. Interestingly, no distinct representatives from the clergy were sent, perhaps as a result of the uncertainty over whether the deputies would even be welcomed in Paris. Regardless, the representatives who eventually emerged as the most influential were Matteo Buttafoco and the Abbe Peretti representing the nobility, while Cristoforo Saliceti and Cesari-Rocca represented the third estate.[9]

The chief aim of these deputies was "that Corsica should cease to be considered and administered as a conquered country, that she should be declared to be an integral part of France and governed by the same laws."[10] In 1789, this request was granted, courtesy of a letter sent by the commune of Bastia that was read on November 30, 1789, to the Assembly by Constantin-Francois Chassbeuf de Volney, a noted deputy who had been appointed by Necker as the Director of Agriculture and Commerce for Corsica.[11] This letter highlighted the similarities between Corsica and France, and the universal desire among Corsicans to join with their French brothers in the Revolution. Following the reading of the letter, a decree was motioned that "declared that Corsica is part of the French empire; that its people must be governed by the same constitution as the other French."[12] The Assembly immediately voted this through, and it was promulgated in January. The Genoese protested this move, arguing that the union of France and Corsica was a violation of the previous treaty whereby

[9] Lucette Ponsin, ed., *Les Doleances de la Corse a Travers les Cahiers de 1789*, 2nd ed. Lucette Ponsin (Ajaccio: La Marge, 1988); Abbe Letteron, *Pièces et documents pour servir à l'histoire de la Corse pendant les années 1790–1791* (Bastia, 1894), 1–9. Hereafter cited as Letteron, *1790–91*. M. Jollivet, *La "Révolution française" en Corse d'après des documents nouveaux* (Toulouse: Privat, 1892).

[10] Memoirs of Pozzo di Borgo, quoted in J. P. McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, 33.

[11] Archives Nationales de France (hereafter cited as AN). Archives Parlementaire, Tome X, 30 Nov. 1789, 335–336. Volney would go on to play a critical role in Corsica's relationship with Paris, though he never officially took up his post.

[12] Ibid., 337, translation mine.

Genoa could have bought the island back. In an early Revolutionary disregard for Old Regime diplomacy, the government welcomed the island into France proper, ignoring the Genoese.[13]

The Revolution initially did little to change the perception of the island as essentially worthless, despite several attempts to make the case for the French simply not fully utilizing the resources of the island.[14] Politically, however, the island went from a failed experiment of the Old Regime to an opportunity for the Revolutionaries to show their benevolence and possibilities for change. In the same session confirming Corsica's status as part of France, Mirabeau also motioned successfully to have all Corsican political exiles amnestied and given French citizenship, including the father of the Corsican nation, Pasquale Paoli: "The National Assembly decrees that those Corsicans who, having fought for freedom, were expatriates, as a result and following the conquest of their island, and yet are guilty of no legal offense, are currently entitled to return to their country to exercise all the rights of French citizens."

This decree was met with applause from the majority of the assembly, further tying Corsica explicitly in to the Revolutionary rhetoric of freedom from oppression and liberty. The general pardon was opposed by some, who presciently saw the negative repercussion: "If the decree is made, it could cause a revolt in the island, and its former inhabitants, offenders towards France, would report to their homeland the memory of their defeat, and would soon abuse the indulgence of the nation." Mirabeau successfully defended his motion, however, and Paoli was free to return to Corsica as a French citizen, with a hero's welcome.[15]

Paoli's return eventually served as a catalyst for anger against the French, but the Revolution itself did much to plant seeds of dissatisfaction. For the Revolutionaries in Paris, Corsica seemed to embody many of the central themes of the Revolution—namely, an oppressed populace fighting against exploitation from absentee overlords. Yet, this view neglected the fact that in the case of Corsica, the perpetrator was the French government

[13] "*Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée générale des trois ordrés de Corse, convoquée a Bastia le dix-huit mai, mil sept cent quatre vingt neuf,*" ed. Chanoine J. B. Casanova, in the *Bulletin de la Société des Sciences Historiques et Naturelles de la Corse* (1934, fasc. 514), 18. Sylvestre Casanova, *La Corse et les États généraux* (Ajaccio: Impr. typographique, 1931), 179–188, and Villat, *La Corse*, II, 47.

[14] MAE P5243, "*Mémoire Présenté a l'assemblée nationale sure l'exploitation des bois dans l'Isle de Corse,*" Janvier 1790.

[15] AN, Archives Parlementaire, Tome X, 30 Nov. 1789, 337. Translation mine.

in Corsica rather than a specific subset of the French population (e.g., the nobility or monarchy). Even under the Old Regime, most of the Corsican vitriol was directed less against the King or the government in Paris and instead much more so against the local meddlers in Corsica. Thus, even though Corsicans largely agreed with the Revolutionary principles, any plan for integration that included a significant French presence in Corsica ran the risk of turning the same rhetoric of liberty and freedom against the Revolutionary government itself.

The initial plan for Corsican integration into France, written primarily by Pozzo di Borgo in 1788 and 1789, called for an increase in taxes and regiments sent to the army, thus benefitting France in general, but for the administration of the island to be opened entirely to Corsicans.[16] If the Assembly had followed this plan, perhaps a relationship could have developed in which the Corsicans welcomed French rule and the French saw it as beneficial to maintain Corsica rather than exploit it. Despite the best attempts by the Corsican deputies in Paris, however, the Assembly never sent this plan to the local administrators in Corsica.[17]

Instead, no taxes were collected or sent to France from 1789 to 1797, and although the local administration of the island did become predominately Corsican, the question then became whether the Corsicans in power were loyal to Corsica or France. Cristoforo Saliceti is an excellent example of this, as he served in the departmental administration of the island following his turn as a deputy; however, he exploited this position for his own benefit and then returned to Paris as a deputy after some irregular elections, becoming a disciple to Robespierre. He returned to Corsica in 1793, as described later, but by this time the split between the Revolution in Corsica and the Revolution in Paris had widened to the point of irreconcilability.

As foretold in the debates of November 30, 1789, the return of Paoli in 1790 began the process of a split with France in earnest. This at first took the form of local political disagreements that resulted in Paoli assuming nearly unilateral control of the island's government. The local municipal governments called a General Consulta to nominally approve the union with France. This assembly was ostensibly representative of all of Corsica, but nearly half of the members failed to attend. As had often been the

[16] McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, 39.

[17] Chuquet, I, 59–65. The French administrator on the island was reluctant to relinquish power, though eventually he would on the return of Paoli.

case in Corsica's history, factionalism threatened to disrupt any meaningful political progress. The Di La dai Monti (i.e., those Corsicans from the southern part of the island, centered around Ajaccio) initially refused to send any deputies and were only convinced to attend by the skillful mediation of Joseph Bonaparte, an Ajaccio native who was entering the political game in 1790.[18]

At the Consulta, however, Paoli shifted the narrative away from internal divisions and clan-based rivalries; instead he painted a picture of those in favor of Old Regime French rule and those in favor of the Revolution.[19] This simple but compelling rhetoric was successful in uniting Corsica either for or against Paoli, but complicated the matter of independence—both sides nominally approved of a union with France but differed on what that union should look like. The Royalists, represented primarily by Buttafoco, were in favor of a full integration with France, but Paoli cast these as loyal to the Old Regime and thus despotic French rule in Corsica. The Paolists meanwhile set themselves as loyal to the Revolution and thus a Corsica liberated from despotism, but they remained vague on the exact relationship between Corsica and France. The Paolists were victorious, but as the Revolution progressed and radicalized, the ambivalence at the heart of the union between France and Corsica blossomed into tension and then outright conflict. At that point, it was a simple rhetorical shift to maintain the fight against despotism, but to target it against the Revolution.

Paradoxically, Paoli himself began to look curiously similar to a despot. At the Consulta, he was elected president of the Assembly, voted an annual salary equivalent in amount to his English pension, designated for a statue and a bust (that would become a baffling source of conflict in later years), confirmed as commander of the National Guard, and was elected the president of the Departmental Council of Bastia.[20] This gave Paoli command over both the civil and military powers and effectively meant the end of the resistance of the Royalists. From Corsica Paoli declared that Buttafoco and Peretti, the representatives of the nobility in Paris, had forfeited the public's confidence. Following this, a great many dissenting Corsican families fled rather than stay under the dictatorship of

[18] *Procès-verbaux des séances d l'assemblée des électeurs du Département de la Corse*, published in Letteron, *1790–1791*, 10–72.

[19] Ibid. See especially the meetings of September 13, 18, 23, and 25. This is a similar process that he used in the 1750s to achieve unity against the Genoese, with much success.

[20] Ibid., 18 September 1790.

Paoli.[21] This accumulation of power in his hands became a cause for concern within Corsica for both the French and later the British. Perhaps more important, however, the emigration of these few but prominent Corsican families would be a continual thorn in the side of whoever ruled Corsica—a constant, if never realized, threat of intrigues and invasion.[22]

In 1790 and 1791 though, this was a distant concern and the Corsicans who remained on the island were relatively united in favor of the Revolution, however ambiguous that term remained. However, within this unity a new wave of opposition arose. In its simplest terms, this opposition was not necessarily opposed to more Corsican autonomy or a certain side of the Revolution, although many of its members would come to be associated with the Jacobins. Rather, this was an anti-Paoli coalition. Even though Paoli was initially welcomed back to the island in the role of an elder statesman who would advise and assist, his election to the numerous offices and his steady insertion into Corsican politics rankled many. Part of this was no doubt ideological: Paoli was never pro-France and those families who supported the Revolution ardently, or simply had close ties to France, were no friends of Paoli (a primary example being the Bonapartes).

Perhaps a larger issue, however, was that Paoli began to fill the government with his own people, again cutting off avenues of advancement for many.[23] Although Paoli's cronyism may have arguably been benevolent, and at least was placing Corsicans into positions of power instead of French, this served to alienate a significant portion of the island's powerful families and provided an opportunity for them to coalesce into a strong opposition party. The chief members of this opposition were Saliceti, who was steadily gaining more influence in Paris; the Aréna family, primarily Barthelemy Aréna; Luce Casabianca; Antoine Multedo; Aurele Francois Varese; and the Bonaparte family.[24] The antidespot rhetoric Paoli utilized

[21] Ibid., 23 September 1790. Paoli elsewhere described Buttafoco and his father-in-law Gaffori as "evil people… ready to sell their country for a crust of bread." Quoted from Gregory, *Ungovernable Rock*, 38.

[22] Gregory makes note of this in *Ungovernable Rock* though he, like I, found little concrete evidence to support the plotting of the Corsicans in Italy.

[23] See Letteron, 1790–91, especially the records of the meetings in the summer of 1791 (183–197, 278–315).

[24] Chuquet, III, 79–83, 270–271; A. Ambrosi-Rossi, "*Lettres inedites de Pozzo di Borgo*," II, 11, 19; Masson and Biagi, II, 410;. McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, 105.

to rid himself of detractors (e.g., Buttafoco), and that he later used against Revolutionary Paris; in late 1791 it began to be used against Paoli himself.

By 1791 there was a widening split between Paoli and his detractors. The internal administration of the island was almost wholly in the hands of Paoli and his supporters.[25] Nevertheless, the opposition party dominated the elections for the Legislative Assembly in Paris, chiefly through the influence and machinations of Saliceti. (Joseph Bonaparte suffered a demoralizing defeat in this election, though it was likely due more to inexperience than any malfeasance from Paoli and supporters.[26]) This left Corsican representatives in Paris in an interesting position.

On the one hand, they enjoyed a substantial amount of goodwill simply by being Corsican, almost as though France felt the need to apologize to Corsica for its previous treatment and thus was willing to excuse some of the obvious transgressions—chief among them financial misadministration.[27] At the same time, the Corsican deputies had to separate themselves from those transgressions, and indeed to a certain extent from the current administrators on the island on whom they pinned the malfeasance, in addition to making it clear that they were loyal to the Revolution. The presence of Paoli's supporters in the island's local administration made a natural scapegoat, so 1792 saw a continual layering of blame on each other as the rift between Paris and Corsica, even among Corsicans, widened.

As Corsica began to drift further away from France and the dissonance between the two conceptions of the Revolution became more evident, public opinion in Corsica remained with Paoli and began to turn against the representatives in Paris. It is important to note, however, that this was not because of an ideological struggle concerning autonomy or Republicanism. Rather, a specific issue of exploitation turned the majority of Corsicans away from supporting the French Revolution and toward supporting Paoli. Saliceti, the chief Corsican in Paris, was instrumental in organizing the sale of the national lands. In Corsica, where wealth was scarce, the lands of the Church and émigrés were negligible. The majority

[25] Letteron, 1790–1791, 13 and 20 September 1791.

[26] See Jollivet, *La Révolution française*, 135, for a quotation from Volney on the irregularities of the elections.

[27] Louis Monestier, *Comte rendu des opérations des commissaires en Corse, par Louis Monestier, avec des observations propres á faire connaitre la situation de ce département au 1er avril 1792* (Paris: Monestier, 1792). Monestier was part of a Commission sent to Paris in 1791 to investigate religious disturbances in Bastia and came away with a wholeheartedly negative opinion of the overall administration of the island.

of land at stake had been taken over by the Genoese and subsequently appropriated by the Old Regime administration. This was then sold, leased, or given primarily to members of the Jacobin party—specifically, around 500 individuals benefited from these policies.[28]

If Saliceti had allocated land based on traditional Corsican clan claims, there would likely have been some dissension, but nothing tumultuous. However, Saliceti distributed the land purely along the political lines established in Paris, superimposing the factionalism of the French Revolution on to the already factionalized Corsican social structure. The majority of Corsicans were more than happy to be French, so long as they also remained Corsicans, but the actions from Paris seemed to ignore and denigrate the fabric of Corsican society and erode its sovereignty. Paoli's anti-Paris party quickly painted the ardent Revolutionaries, especially the Jacobins, with the same brush as the Genoese and the Old Regime administration: Exploiting the island for their own good while ignoring the will of the Corsicans.

The strength of Paoli, meanwhile, lay in his ability to work within the clan-based, factional system of Corsica to achieve workable results. This coalition-building was at the heart of Corsican internal statecraft, and although the misappropriation of land did not immediately turn Paoli away from France, many Corsicans became even more loyal and closely aligned with the elderly leader. Paoli's followers began to claim that the representatives in Paris had effectively "gone native" and were more interested in currying favor in Paris than supporting Corsica. Saliceti and his followers would in turn begin to brand Paoli with the treasonous charge of "Counter-Revolutionary."[29] This did not yet take the explicit form of claiming that Paoli privileged Corsica over the greater good of France and the Revolution, but the implications were clear. In all likelihood, the charges made against both key figures were appropriate. Saliceti, though still motivated by Corsican politics, had found his home in the charged atmosphere of Paris, while Paoli in nearly all cases prioritized Corsica over France.

The applicability or veracity of the claims notwithstanding, the key issue is the use by Saliceti of the political rhetoric of the Revolution within the

[28] The full account of this can be found in Antoine Casanova, *La Revolution francaise en Corse* (Toulouse: Privat, 1989).

[29] Saliceti to Napoleon, Paris, 9 Janvier 1793, in Masson and Biagi, *Napoléon inconnu,* II, 415.

context of Corsica. By applying the label of "Counter-Revolutionary" to Paoli, Saliceti attempted to export the political language of the Revolution to the Mediterranean and to impose the radical elements of French politics onto his home island. Saliceti's motivations may have been genuine Jacobin zeal, or they simply may have been a case of finding the most offensive term of the time to cast Paoli in as bad of a light as possible for personal reasons. Certainly Saliceti would have wanted to pin some of his own failings on Paoli—that is, Saliceti had been responsible for the misadministration of the island in 1790 and 1791, especially guilty of cronyism and financial misdealings. His use of Jacobin language to attack Paoli is telling. Saliceti had forsaken the limited, although defined scope of Corsican political culture, in order to establish himself in the much broader, but more ambiguous Revolutionary system. Whether this was done out of the mistaken belief that Revolutionary politics would supplant internal Corsican factionalism or out of ignorance concerning the position and power of Paoli is unclear; however, the result was that Saliceti alienated himself from the Corsican population and endeared himself to Paris.

Similarly, it is unclear the extent to which Paoli actually was a Counter-Revolutionary and to what extent the accusations against him by Saliceti were initially believed. Certainly Paoli was not in favor of the radical Revolution, stating that "the National Assembly seems to be in delirium" and "the Jacobin club will be our ruin."[30] But the discussion in Paris was centered entirely around whether Paoli was in favor of Corsica being governed by the Revolution, or in favor of a Bourbon Restoration.[31] Again, the Assembly phrased the discourse in a way that purely applied to the situation in Paris, ignoring the impact of the Revolutionary rhetoric in a Mediterranean and Corsican context. Even though the Revolution created the ability of the Corsican state to express itself, it ignored that expression in favor of the Parisian vision of the state.

Paoli was not interested in defining himself in relation to the Revolution of the *sans-culottes* or Girondins. Rather, he took the opportunity provided by the Revolution to reach for political liberty in the form of autonomous rule and self-determination. A relationship with France was certainly possible and even beneficial, but only insofar as it led to a Corsica free from

[30] Paoli to Cesari, Monticello 27 March 1792, in *Lettres de Pascal Paoli Publiees par M. le Docteur Perelli* (Bastia: 1884–99), IV, 92.

[31] AN AF/II/149. *Communique au Citoyen Barrere qui à faire le rapport des affaires de la Corse*, from Luce Casabianca, Paris, 4 June 1792.

foreign despotism, French despotism included. Paoli took the political tools offered by the Revolution, but did not accept them wholesale, nor reject them. Instead, he reframed the Revolution in a Corsican context. In Paris however, neither the Girondin nor the Montagnard parties considered the middle ground of Corsican autonomy or self-governance.

This is no doubt in part because the primary voices in Paris were Saliceti and friends who were not in favor of independence, but instead had tied their fortunes solely to the radicalizing Revolution. More important, however, this demonstrates the inflexibility of the vision of the state found in Paris. They thought of Corsica as part of a ubiquitous construction of France, though in practice Corsica existed as part of a separate Mediterranean dynamic, and it was actively practicing a distinct sphere of international politics.

This inflexible perspective only further hardened in the last months of 1792 and early 1793 as the Revolution coalesced into its more radical form. The creation of the National Convention, the execution of the King (Saliceti was the only Corsican deputy to vote for his death, further proving his loyalty to the radicalizing forces), and the rising tensions between Girondin and Montagnard all served to slowly push Corsica further away from the Revolutionary thinking in Paris. These events weighed heavily on the mind of Paoli, who was vehemently opposed to the regicide, and further strained his relationship with Paris.[32] Still, Corsica remained largely untouched by these events up until 1793.

To most Corsicans, these ethereal concepts of Conventions and Parisian factions were of little practical importance. Likewise, the Convention could forgive Paoli's faraway intransigence, though the lack of tax revenue from the island remained a point of contention.[33] As radicalization made its way from the Convention halls to the pouches of diplomats and orders of generals, however, the Revolution attempted to reconcile the different conceptions of it in favor of Paris and centralization. The hope was that Corsica would serve as a valuable launching point for a push into the rest of the Mediterranean via an invasion from the island to its southern neighbor, Sardinia. This invasion did coincide with Corsica and the Mediterranean entering more fully into the European arena, but as a reaction against the Revolution, not in support of it.

[32] Paoli to Cesari, Monticello 2 February 1792, in *Lettres de Pascal Paoli publiées par M. le Docteur Perelli* (Bastia: 1884–99), VI, 12.

[33] Chuquet, III, 92.

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The initial idea for the invasion of Sardinia came in 1791 from none other than Buttafoco, and then again in May of 1792 by Antoine Constantini. In both proposals, the immediate rationale was the superior ports offered in Sassari and Cagliari as well as the important matter of grain production.[34] Lord Hervey was using everything in his power to make the purchase of Tuscan and even Genoese grain difficult for the French, so a reliable source of grain in Sardinia was highly desirable. From the perspective of Lazare Carnot in Paris, there also were military and political considerations because this would strike a blow against the House of Savoy and further intimidate Florence and Naples.[35] For both the Corsican Jacobins, who sought the praise of the Convention, and the Paolists, who were seeking to avoid being noticed by Paris, the appeal was more self-serving. Playing a role in this pursuit would prove their worth to the Revolution.

According to the Corsican deputies in Paris, Sardinia's population would welcome the liberation offered by the Revolution, and at the sight of the French troops and the sound of Paoli's name, the populace would rise up against their oppressive monarchs. Marius Peraldi wrote in his plan for the invasion in 1792: "Paoli, whose love of freedom and equality has been so famous, could be of great utility. … He has among the Sardinians a great reputation and his presence on their island will contribute to the success of our army."[36] Saliceti, who assured all that the conquest of Sardinia would be simple, approved the plan, especially the underlying rhetoric.[37] Yet, this reliance on radical Revolutionary rhetoric in lieu of sound strategy would come back to haunt the expedition.

Along with the Parisian contingent of Corsicans who sought to prove Corsica's worth to the Republic's war efforts, Paoli too joined in, at first

[34] *Memoire contenant des moyens contre le roi de Sardaigne*, in Abbe Letteron, *Pièces et documents pour servir à l'histoire de la Corse pendant la Révolution Française*, I (Bastia, 1894), 4–13. Hereafter cited as Letteron, *Révolution Française*. Most of Letteron's sources on the Sardinian invasion come from the *Archives du Ministère de la Guerre* (hereafter AMG), carton Corse, 1792–1802 and AMG, carton *Corse*, correspondance, 1792–1804. See 26–39 of Letteron, *Révolution Française,* for further invasion plans from Peraldi and Truguet.

[35] Philip Dwyer, *Napoleon: The Path to Power, 1769–1799* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 107.

[36] AMG, cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1804, *Les trois corps administratifs de Marseille réunis à la Convention nationale,* 8 Oct.

[37] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1804, *Saliceti au Ministre de la Guerre*, 17 Juin 1792.

enthusiastically, with the invasion plans.[38] Although this may seem counterintuitive given Paoli's skepticism concerning the radical turn of the Revolution, in late 1792 he still wanted to work with the Revolution and was hoping to accrue as much goodwill as possible. Not only that, but in early 1793 the French were in firm military control of the Mediterranean, with only the distant possibility of an English fleet as relief. Should the radical forces of the Revolution see in Corsica, or specifically Paoli, the Counter-Revolutionary agenda his opponents were claiming he expressed, the reprisals would be swift and unchecked by England or anyone else.

Should the invasion be successful, Paoli would be safe from accusations from Paris, and the Parisian deputies would be able to forestall pressure concerning the financial administration of Corsica. Where Paoli differed from his counterparts on the Continent was in his vision for the execution of the invasion. Although the rhetoric of a populace overthrowing the shackles of monarchy had a certain appeal, and Valmy seemed to have proven that it could have tactical worth, Paoli had little faith that his name would win the day; instead, he took a keen interest in the actual execution of the invasion.

The plan itself went through several iterations. Initially, courtesy of Constantini, the plan called for four regiments of regular infantry, as well as four battalions of Corsican volunteers and a company of artillery from Toulon. The Corsicans would provide a distraction in the north, attacking the Maddalena Archipelego, followed by Sassari, and then start a general revolt among the populace. Meanwhile, Admiral Truguet and his regular forces would focus on the real prize of Cagliari in the south.[39] The simplicity and surety of this plan had many admirers. Semonville, fresh off his disastrous stint as the French representative in Genoa and on his way to a new post in Constantinople, formed a quick opinion of the expedition as "practically infallible."[40]

This confidence proved problematic, however, when d'Anselme, the general initially placed in charge of the expedition, decided that his troops were superfluous to the success of the operation. If it were a sure victory, his troops were of more use in Nice to forestall any internal uprisings or Piedmontese incursions. He passed the responsibility to Raphael

[38] Paoli sent numerous letters to Anselme, Truguet, and even Semonville in November of 1792. See Letteron, *Révolution Française,* I, 46–56.

[39] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1804, Marius Peraldi, *Au Ministre de la Guerre*, 7 Oct.

[40] *Le Citoyen Semonville au citoyen General Paoli*, S. Florent, 15 Novembre 1792, in Letteron, *Révolution Française,* I, 48.

Casabianca, who joined with Admiral Truguet in enthusiastically trumpeting the forthcoming attack on Cagliari, but instead of the four regiments of regular infantry from d'Anselme, Casabianca proposed to bring 4000 newly raised troops from the streets of Marseille.[41] He argued that their Revolutionary zeal would offset their inexperience. Casabianca also thought that this eagerness would serve as an excellent complement to the presumed enthusiasm for the Revolution among the Sardinian population.[42] The zeal of the Marseillais would indeed prove to be decisive, but not in the way intended or even on the right island.

The confidence emanating from Paris mixed with the small amount of practical military support left Paoli in a difficult position. Although there were certainly benefits to supporting the invasion, Paoli correctly surmised that if the invasion failed, he would be risking much more than the Parisian deputies. Saliceti would simply return to placing the blame on Paoli for all of the problems of Corsica, and add the failed Sardinian invasion to the list. Therefore, Paoli began to distance himself, while at the same time maintaining nominal support. To this end, he placed his nephew, Cesari, in charge of the actual invasion on the grounds that he was too old and in ill health to lead personally. Instead, he would command the troops left in Corsica.[43] Cesari made the best of the situation, but sent repeated warnings to Truguet and Casabianca about the poor planning.

Cesari, and by extension Paoli, was specifically concerned about the burden placed on the Corsican volunteers.[44] These troops were poorly trained and ill-equipped, besides the fact that their number was too few to realistically succeed in taking the Archipelego, much less Sassari. Truguet addressed these concerns by requesting more Corsican troops from Paoli, who replied that he did not have sufficient forces to guard the ports and also contribute four battalions; instead Paoli sent less than half the amount initially requested.[45] Thus, what initially was to be an 8000-man invasion

[41] Ibid., 57–80. Raphael's first communications with Paoli are on the 31 December 1792, found in Letteron, *Révolution Française*, I, 78–80.

[42] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1797, *Lettre du Citoyen Casabianca au General Paoli, Ajaccio*, 9 Janvier 1793.

[43] Archives Departmental Haute-Corse (hereafter ADHC), Bastia, L8 n. 11, 9 Janvier, *Le général Paoli nomme Colonna-Cesari commandant de la contreattaque sur l'ile de la Madeleine*.

[44] Ibid., 11 janvier, *Lettre de Colonna-Cesari a XX*.

[45] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1804, *Le Lieutenant-General Paoli au Ministre de la Guerre; Paoli au Ministre de la Guerre*, 2 Janvier 1793. The latter communication includes a long list of worries about the expedition and would come to be used as proof that Paoli was never in support and had essentially caused the failure of the expedition.

force, of which 4000 were regular troops, became, at most, a 6000-man force; it was made up entirely of volunteers or green recruits pressed into service from the streets of Marseille, many of whom were not even armed.

On a planning level then, the Sardinian expedition had the seeds for disaster, but disaster struck before the expedition even began. In what is one of the most telling series of interactions between Corsica and the French Revolution, the French troops and the Corsican troops nearly killed each other before ever getting to Sardinia. The first incident involved Truguet's marines from Toulon. The sailors disembarked in Ajaccio, where they promptly "hung two Corsican volunteers, hacked them into pieces and walked through the streets with their bloody tatters"; the charge was being Counter-Revolutionaries. This incident nearly resulted in the Corsican volunteer battalions attacking Truguet's forces, but Truguet ordered his troops to go back to the ships and departed before the situation exploded.[46]

The troops from Marseille brought more trouble. At first, Casabianca landed them in the north of Corsica (Saint-Florent) and 1100 made their way to Bastia. There the Corsicans refused them entry and fired on them, severely wounding one. This nearly resulted in the French troops storming the citadel of Bastia and pillaging the city; however, the cool-headed commandant of Bastia, Don-Grazio Rossi, narrowly prevented this. It is unclear exactly what provoked the violence, but from the perspective of the Corsicans, the Marseillais were little better than criminals and were not welcome in their city; although from the perspective of the Marseillais, the Corsicans animosity toward them was in fact animosity toward the Revolution.

From Bastia the French troops went to Ajaccio, where the unrest was so bad that Casabianca was forced to imprison many of his own men to prevent violence from erupting in the streets. Some of the charges listed were numerous rapes and murders of both Corsican civilians and volunteer troops. In one minor example, a Marseillais stole vegetables from a garden and subsequently the local justice of the peace imprisoned him. In response to this, the other Marseillais troops stormed the prison demanding his release. This then resulted in the Corsican volunteers mobilizing in the streets and again, if not for the timely intervention of cool-headed officers, the invasion of Sardinia would have become a civil

[46] Quoted from Chuquet *Le jeunesse de Napoléon*, III, 48; translation mine. For the correspondence surrounding the incidents, see Letteron, *Révolution Française*, I, 97–103.

war in Corsica.[47] Following this disturbance, Casabianca quickly loaded his troops on board his ships and continued down to Cagliari.

On the one hand, it is likely that the roots of these conflicts lay in the fact that the troops were green, undisciplined recruits. Looking deeper, however, the Corsicans attributed the actions of both the Marseillais and Truguet's Toulonese as attempting to bring the radical Revolution, along with riots and guillotines, to Corsica. The Corsican reactions against this served to confirm to the zealous French that Corsica was in fact Counter-Revolutionary and in need of radicalization. At this point, legislatures and Consultas did not decide the relationship between Corsica and the Revolution, but rather the citizens and soldiers and their diverse, and at times competing, forms of Revolutionary politics in the Mediterranean. These events proved to be a crucial turning point in the relationship between France and Corsica.

The actions of the Marseillais and the Corsicans' response were indicative of the Corsican relationship with France in 1792—that is, although not overtly antagonistic, it was clear that stark differences were emerging and that conflict between them was imminent. As Pozzo di Borgo wrote in reference to the use of street lamps to hang "dissidents" or "counter-revolutionaries": "The street lamp is not the distinctive identification of free men, and we shall work with zeal to prevent the rooting of this barbaric usage amongst us: the people would believe itself dishonored if it became habituated to these frightful scenes."[48] In other words, though the Revolution may have equated to violence and terror in Paris, Corsica retained its civility. The Revolution had come to mean two very different things in France and in the Western Mediterranean.

Even though the actions of the French troops clearly demonstrate the split between France and Corsica, if the Sardinian expedition had been successful, it is possible that both parties would have overlooked the tensions. However, given that the success of the invasion hinged on the same men who very nearly derailed it before the actual commencement of battle, hopes were not high regarding the expedition. Paoli commented, "*Je prévois des malheurs* [I anticipate misfortune]" in reference to the continued participation of the Marseillais in the expedition following their run-ins on Corsica.[49] Not only were they undisciplined, but their bru-

[47] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1797, *Paoli au Ministre de la guerre*, 16 Janvier 1793.
[48] AN, M. 668 d.6; translation mine. The letters are all from January and February 1793.
[49] Quoted in Chuquet, *Le jeunesse de Napoléon,* III, 50.

tal method of encouraging conformity to radical Revolutionary rhetoric alienated Corsica and would have had the same effect in Sardinia. The radical Revolutionary foreign policy that began to show through in Italy in 1792 had made its way to Corsica and Sardinia and displaced sound military and/or diplomatic strategy.

Paoli's premonition of disaster was prescient.[50] A mere two days after the Marseillais regiments left Corsica, they fled in panic at the battle for Cagliari.[51] This was on February 16, 1793. On February 18, Cesari gave the order to commence the Corsican attack on the north. Thus, the Casabianca and Truguet attacks on the south of Sardinia and the real prize of Cagliari failed even before the Corsican invasion began. If the Corsican invasion had been successful, the success would have been short lived. The point was moot, however, because the Maddelena Archipelego proved too much for the Corsican troops to handle. The population did not rise up in support of the Revolution, despite a rousing pamphlet prepared for distribution.[52] Napoleon, who was in charge of half of the Corsican attack force, would later say about this invasion that he had never seen such improvidence and lack of talent. He would go on to claim that his attack would have been successful if Cesari had not called him off; however, this in itself is debatable.[53] Cesari's reason for retreat was that his troops mutinied, though because of the chaos that would ensue over the next several months, he was unable to substantiate this claim.[54]

Regardless, the Sardinian invasion was an unmitigated failure. The impact of the Sardinian invasion, however, goes beyond a military disaster, as it revealed the fault lines of the Mediterranean, the disconnect between Paris and Corsica, and the potential for creating diverse forms of international interaction. The failure of the invasion was a blow to French foreign policy, but even if both the northern and southern arms of the invasion had been successful, the entrance of the British fleet a few months later,

[50] For details on the specific military fiasco, see Chuquet, III, 47; and Letteron, *Révolution Française,* I, 140–155 for Truguet's detailed communications during the invasion; 150–162 for Cesari's account; 169–180 for Rear-Admiral Latouche's detailed account; 185–189 for Casabianca's report. The originals of these documents can be found in AN D 1, 31. Also see Letteron, *Révolution Française,* I, 145 and Chuquet, III, 50.

[51] See Letteron, *Révolution Française,* I, 145 and Chuquet, III, 50.

[52] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1804, *Janvier, traduction d'une pièce en vers italiens.*

[53] Chuquet, III, ch. XIV details the Napoleonic version of the invasion of Sardinia.

[54] Cesari to Paoli, 1 March 1793, in Letteron, *Révolution Française,* I, 190–197. He specifically recounts the tale of the mutiny on 197–204.

coupled with the coming revolts in Toulon and Corsica, would have left any French occupation of Sardinia on shaky ground by August. From this point, the battle for the Western Mediterranean, particularly Corsica, was not one fought chiefly by ships or soldiers, but by politics and statesmen.

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The first move following the failure of the Sardinian expedition was for Paoli's opponents in Paris to strike against his authority on the island from afar. The initial complaints about Paoli came from former deputy Barthelmy Aréna, who had accompanied the expedition as a Commissioner, along with Peraldi. Interestingly, the first letter Aréna sent to the Ministre des Affaires Etrangères concerning the failed invasion places the blame, likely accurately, on the Marseillais. At the first signs of battle, they panicked and wanted to surrender.[55] Soon, however, Aréna joined forces with the Marseillais in blaming Paoli for the failure of the expedition.[56] They pointed especially to Paoli's refusal to contribute more troops and his failure to supply even the initially requested 4000. Further questions about his military ability and loyalty arose from the Army of Italy. Paoli's command in Corsica was technically under General Biron, the commander of the Army of Italy, and in both January and March of 1793 he voiced his suspicions as a result of Paoli refusing to visit the mainland headquarters on account of his health.[57]

Once the floodgates opened following the attempted Sardinian invasion, Paoli was attacked on all fronts. The declaration of war between France and Britain made Paoli's time in London into an issue. Saliceti and Aréna, among others, also sought to blame any maladministration on Paoli, whether the problems resulted from their own poor efforts or circumstances out of their and Paoli's control. This was compounded by the Finance Minister, Claviére, presenting a scathing critique of the financial situation on Corsica on February 7, bringing to light the failure to pay taxes, as well as bringing up sensitive issues (e.g., refusing to take *assignats*

[55] ADHC, L8 n. 11, *Aréna au Ministre Affaires Étrangères, au golfe de Cagliari*, 22 Fevrier 1793.

[56] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1804, "*Relation de l'expédition de Sardaigne faite par Aréna à Nice le 10 Mars 1793.*"

[57] Le General Biron, *Général en chef de l'armée d'Italie, au citoyen Pache, ministère de la guerre.* A Nice. 28 Janvier 1793; 6 Mars 1793; 4 Avril 1793—in Letteron, *Révolution Française*, I, 123, 242–243, 291–292.

and, perhaps most damning, protecting non-juring priests).[58] Although the Convention saw this report prior to the Sardinian invasion, they did not make an issue of it until the necessity of finding a scapegoat for the failure of the expedition brought Claviére's critique to the fore. He actually correctly placed blame equally on Saliceti, along with Paoli, and Pozzo di Borgo, the chief administrator of the forces on the island for the previous three years. Still, given that Saliceti was in Paris to defend himself, the denunciations stemming from Claviére's critique only went against Pozzo di Borgo and Paoli.

What had been confined mostly to accusations in personal or administrative correspondence, however, became public when, on March 20 and 21, Constantin Volney published his "Précis de d'état de la Corse" in the *Moniteur*.[59] Volney had spent most of the year of 1792 in Corsica, engaged in various investigations and projects. This proved an almost complete waste of his time and money as Paoli did not welcome him; however, he did manage to form a strong opinion of the island—and to make the acquaintance of Napoleon Bonaparte, a friendship he maintained throughout the Empire. In the diatribe published on his return, he accused Paoli of "cunning machiavelianism," misadministration, and various other offenses. Volney also made it clear that he saw Paoli as a figurehead and that his lieutenant, Pozzo di Borgo, was in reality pulling the strings.

Even though many of the accusations made were as a result of the propaganda campaign designed by Paoli's enemies, one of the more substantive issues brought up by Volney was that he was promoting Corsican independence: "…especially when Paoli, for two years now, and at present the little pretenders who want to take his place, attempt to stir up the vanity of the people to become what they call an *independent people*."[60] Somewhat paradoxically when arguing against the sentiment of independence, Volney also contrasted Corsica with France, highlighting

[58] Chuquet, *Le jeunesse de Napoléon,* III, 93. The administrators in Corsica made an attempt to refute the charges by Claviere by pointing out that they had only been in office three months. "*Les administrateurs du directoire de Corse a la Convention Nationale.*" A Corte, 28 Mars, 1793, in Letteron, *Révolution Française,* II, 407–411.

[59] *Le Moniteur Universel*, N. 80, Mercredi 20 Mars 1793, "*Précis de l'état de la Corse, par Volney*"; 21 Mars 1793, "*Suite du Précis de l'état actuel de la Corse*, *par Volney.*"

[60] *Le Moniteur Universel*, N. 80, 21 Mars 1793, "*Suite du Précis de l'état actuel de la Corse, par Volney.*"

the incompatibility between the two: "Corsica… is totally different from the rest of France."[61]

The Convention could not sit idly by while these accusations flew.[62] The solution, and one that Paoli initially welcomed, was the appointment of a theoretically impartial Commission to travel to Corsica and report on the island's status.[63] Lacombe Saint-Michel was the first member of the Commission. Primarily tasked with investigating the accusations made by Biron, Saint-Michel was a former artillery officer who had served with the Army of Italy and proven himself on previous occasions. Alongside him was Delcher, a lawyer and member of the Committee of General Defense. Delcher was more involved with assessing the administration of the island and judging the complaints issued by Claviére and Volney. Ultimately, Delcher did little as the situation on the island quickly escalated beyond the level of simple misadministration. Finally, the Convention decided to send a Corsican to act as a guide and interpreter. They chose to send the most prominent Corsican member of the Convention, who had proven himself on previous commissions and, crucially, proven himself a loyal Revolutionary by voting for the death of the King. The choice was none other than Saliceti.

There were several other significant figures attached to the Commission, most notably Barthelmy Aréna, one of the key anti-Paoli Corsicans, and Huguet de Semonville, who was still meandering through the Mediterranean instead of taking his place in Constantinople. Both were strong proponents of spreading the radical Revolution to the Mediterranean and cast all who opposed that agenda as Counter-Revolutionary. Thus, although technically the Commission was sent to deal with a matter internal to Revolutionary France, the actual matter at hand was the promulgation of Revolutionary foreign policy to Corsica and then into the Mediterranean. Paoli had been reluctant and downright resistant to assisting with this project, so it was the task of the Commission to bring Corsica into the fold, and then to use Corsica as a springboard to continue the spread of Revolution into the Western Mediterranean arena. First, however, they had to resolve the situation on the island.

[61] *Le Moniteur Universel*, N. 80, 20 Mars 1793, "*Précis de l'état de la Corse, par Volney.*"

[62] See Chuquet, III, 99–102, for a more detailed account of the accusations against Paoli and Corsica and the response of the Convention.

[63] AN, AF/II/94/693 is the report on this Committee.

Initially, the Directory in charge of the administration of Corsica (peopled almost entirely by Paoli's admirers), welcomed the opportunity to set the record straight regarding their administration of the island, but looked to the Convention rather than the Commission. They pointed out in a series of letters that many of the complaints were actually against the previous administration.[64] This tactic was dangerous, however, because three of the key members of that previous administration were now deputies in Paris, and two were headed back to Corsica: Saliceti as part of the Commission and Aréna as a companion to the Commission. The Convention in Paris responded by refusing to adjudicate from afar, instead placing decisions regarding the island in the hands of the Commission.[65]

Forced to deal with the Commission, the Directory's initial strategy was to undermine the credibility of the anti-Paoli members of the Commission. They began by demanding that Barthelmy Aréna surrender 30,000 francs of public money that he had retained from a previous post. The Directory claimed that when they initially confronted Aréna with his pilfering, he deposited the sums in various fortresses on the island still occupied by regular French troops and fled to Paris.[66] Aréna hoped that by gaining influence via the Revolution, he would be able to safeguard the money, but due to Paoli retaining control of the island, the situation became a stalemate. With his return, however, the Directory wrote to the Ministry of the Interior that they would arrest Aréna as a disturber of the peace if he set foot in the island.[67] True to their word and uncowed by the authority wielded by the Commission, when Barthelmy arrived in Bastia with Saliceti on April 6, the Directory had him arrested.[68]

The Commission saw this as an attempt to undermine their credibility, picking off Aréna and then moving up to Saliceti. If they allowed the arrest to stand, they were in danger of losing whatever authority their mandate from Paris gave them. They promptly had Aréna released.[69] At this point, other members of the Aréna family returned to Corsica from self-imposed exile and flaunted themselves in the streets of Bastia, where they were safe from Paoli and under the protection of the Commission.

[64] "*Les administrateur du directoire… à la Convention,*" Letteron *Révolution Française,* II, 422.

[65] Chuquet, III, 105.

[66] Ibid., 106–107. See also AN AFII/7, 31 Mars 1793.

[67] AN AFII/7, 31 Mars 1793.

[68] AN D §1, 16, "*Lettres des Commissaires au Comite de Salut Public*," 11 Avril.

[69] Ibid. Also see AN AA/48 d. 1379 f. 2.

Thus, Paoli's earlier strategy of easing tensions between the many diverse factions of Corsica, by uniting them either for or against himself, came back to haunt him. The authority of the Commission now stood in direct contrast with Paoli's authority on the island, and those who sought to oppose him flocked to the banner of the Commission and, by extension, the radical Revolution.

After the Commission freed Aréna, tension steadily increased between Paoli's administration in Corte, a mountainous city in the center of the island, and the commissioners in Bastia on the northeast coast. Pozzo di Borgo proposed that the Directory and Paoli should go meet the commissioners in St. Florent, a town stanchly Paolist but closer in proximity to Bastia. There the commissioners would be isolated from the influences of the anti-Paoli Corsicans but not far enough from their base of power in Bastia to be in fear of abduction. The hope was that this would enable them to treat with Paoli and the Directory as representatives from Paris, and that they could reach an accord to circumvented the internal politics of Corsica. Paoli rejected this plan, however, and he took no further steps to receive the commissioners.[70]

The Commission issued a proclamation to the citizens of the island on April 10, assuring them of the affection of the National Convention for their "new brothers." The proclamation also explicitly acknowledged the oppression suffered by Corsica under the Old Regime, but it reminded the Corsicans that the French people were also oppressed, so they had a common ground in the Revolution. There was also a somewhat underhanded reference to the vulnerability of Corsica:

> It is possible that some power may wish to attempt the conquest of Corsica to add to its fields, but all of Europe is convinced that the courage of the French Corsicans, seconded by that of their brethren on the continent and the great capacity of the Republic has and will fearlessly resist the audacity of its enemies.[71]

This was followed by the claim that unity with France offered many more advantages than any other nation could offer, and held forth the ambiguous promise of shared sovereignty: "Would you highlight the advantages

[70] AN D §1, 16, "*Lettres des Commissaires au Comité de Salut Public*," 11 Avril. For an account taken from Pozzo di Borgo's Memoirs, see also Chuquet, 110 and McErlean, 121.

[71] AN D §1, 16, *Proclamation des Commissaires nationaux envoyés en Corse.* Translation mine.

that Corsica had in its separation from France? What nation can offer Corsica benefits of an association with the French Republic, with which it shares sovereignty?"[72]

Despite their attempts at appealing directly to the people, however, no reconciliation could come except through Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo, a fact the Commission understood and reiterated in their report to the Committee of Public Safety on April 11. The two leading figures of the Corsican government rebuffed all attempts to lure them to Bastia where they could be influenced or even abducted. Each refusal meant a deepening of the tension between the Revolutionary Commission and the administration of Corsica, and a prolonging of the stalemate.[73] Pozzo later described the maneuvering of Saliceti and his responses in his *Plan des memoires*:

> His [Saliceti's] plan was to establish the Terror in Corsica. Mine was to do nothing extraordinary, to maintain peace in the island and not to fall out with or still less separate from France, even though it was republic, and to await the benefits of time and the ending of a crisis which since it was violent could not last long. General Paoli promoted this system without any afterthoughts of either independence or of submission to the English.[74]

There is no doubt the benefit of hindsight in Pozzo's analysis, though it was essential for Saliceti's position that Corsica accept the radical Revolution.[75] Meanwhile, Pozzo and Paoli may have been satisfied with a working relationship with France but in that moment both saw the impossibility of Corsican autonomy in the Revolutionary system. Thus, both sides were poised to continue the test of wills. However, neither would have the opportunity, as events had been set in motion even before the arrival of the Commission that would render moot all the careful positioning and planning of Saliceti and Pozzo di Borgo. In mid-April news arrived, first to Paoli and then the Commissioners, that the Convention had ordered the Commission to arrest Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid. Chuquet, *Le jeunesse de Napoléon,* III, 32, 110, 131; Masson and Biagi, *Napoléon inconnu,* II, 424. See also McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, 121, for an account taken from Pozzo di Borgo's Memoirs.

[74] Quoted and translated in McErlean, 122.

[75] AN AD/XVIIIc/354.

This bombshell was not a result of any actions or recommendations of the Commission, but rather the work of Lucien Bonaparte. The Bonaparte family had become closely associated with the anti-Paoli, radical forces. (Elisa Bonaparte had actually briefly become Truguet's paramour in late 1792–1793.) Lucien became Semonville's secretary and accompanied the delinquent diplomat to Toulon. Frustrated by what he saw as the plodding pace of the Commission and the subsequent precarious place of his family, Lucien elected to take matters into his own hands. He appeared before the Jacobin club, where he "declaimed on the state of Corsica, denouncing Paoli, denouncing [Pozzo di Borgo], and denouncing other members of the government." This denunciation was then passed along to the Toulonese deputies, who made the accusations in Paris.

According to Pozzo: "They denounced us as false patriots, which was sufficient for a decree to be voted without examination and without debate whose effect was that General Paoli and I were to be arrested and brought to the bar of the Convention."[76] This was precisely the type of attack that Saliceti had deliberately avoided and it horrified him, as well as the remaining Corsican representatives in Paris. Within the context of the Mediterranean, the Commissioners realized that as went Paoli, so went Corsica and as went Corsica, so went the French fortunes in the Mediterranean. There needed to be reconciliation between the Corsican and the Parisian conceptions of the state, not a break.

The Commission was tasked with arresting Paoli, the powerful and influential geriatric who had been set up as a symbol of liberty not only by France in 1790 but also by the Commission itself on arrival in Corsica. The proclamation issued on the initial landing of the Commission mentioned heroes of Corsican liberty as heroes to the French as well, a specific reference to Paoli.[77] Now the arrest of Paoli would entirely undermine the work of the Commission, and serve to set the Corsicans who worshipped Paoli not only against it but also against the Revolution that the members represented. The arrest warrant and the subsequent reaction on the island against it did serve to bring Corsica in from the fringe of the European political system, but not as part of the French Revolution.[78]

[76] Ibid. The debates around the arrest decree can be found in AN, Archives Parlementaires, Tome LXI, 89–92. Interestingly, Pozzo is not directly named.

[77] AN D §1, 16, *Proclamation des Commissaires nationaux envoyés en Corse*.

[78] The decree calling for their arrest was rescinded on June 5, 1793. Constantini, the *deputes extraordinaire* from Corsica to the Convention, gleefully notified Paoli and Pozzo of this on June 8, but the news was far too late to make any significant difference in the course

While it was abundantly clear to Saliceti that moving to arrest Paoli would have far-reaching, mostly negative consequences, he nonetheless hastened to comply. The Commission stripped Paoli and Pozzo of their military and civil positions. They ordered the municipality of Corte to arrest Paoli and Pozzo, an order that the local officials refused to follow. The island began to buzz with military activity as Lacombe St. Michel sent French troops to ensure that various key areas would not fall into Paolist hands. In some places, the local population loyal to Paoli blocked the passage of troops, and Saliceti and St. Michel's moves were successful only in St. Florent and Calvi in the north.[79] Nothing was undertaken against the strongly Paolist municipalities of Bonifacio, Corte, and Ajaccio. Saliceti himself and the other commissioners were solidly entrenched in Bastia.

Corsica was poised to erupt into conflict. Paoli initially took a conciliatory tone, as an outright military conflict would be difficult for Corsica to emerge from victoriously, and he still hoped for some level of moderation to prevail in Paris, perhaps in the form of the rising tide of federalism. He therefore distributed a circular on April 25 designed to calm down the "generous indignations" of the Corsicans on his behalf.[80] He urged the islanders to have confidence in the justice of the Convention. The next day he penned a letter to it, affirming his fidelity to France and repeating that he was old and sick and that travel was not possible; Paoli added that he would go in to exile rather than be the occasion of strife.[81] The latter claim seems somewhat unlikely but regardless, Paoli initially sought to avoid an outright break from France. This was perhaps him stalling for time until the arrival of the English or a change in Revolutionary governments, or perhaps Paoli's genuine loyalty to the French Revolution, even if still primarily his own interpretation of it. For Paoli, the Corsican state was distinct but not necessarily opposed to the Revolutionary state.

From the French perspective, there was initial ambivalence, despite the strong language of the initial denunciation. In a letter written to the Ministry of War on May 9, Brunet urged caution when dealing with Corsica. He brought two salient points to bear. First, Brunet doubted the tactical ease of dislodging Paoli and his administration from their moun-

of events. AN, AD/XVIIIc/354, *Correspondance du C. Constantini*, no. IX, X, XI. On the first of July, the arrest order was reinstated and by the 17 of July it had been expanded to include the entire seated administration. Ibid, no. XXXII.

[79] AN, ADXVIIIc/354, *Rapport des Lacombe Saint-Michel.*

[80] *Le general Paoli a ses concitoyens*, in Letteron, *Révolution Française,* II, 451.

[81] Chuquet, *Le jeunesse de Napoléon,* III, 127.

tain fortress in Corte. Therefore, he stated, "I think it would be much better to use all means of gentleness and conciliation, before use of armed force."[82] Second, he noted that despite the undoubted patriotism and loyalty to the Republic of Saliceti and Aréna, they would never be accepted by the Corsicans loyal to Paoli: "The fierce nature of Corsicans does not believe his vengeance [will be] sated until when he has dipped his hands in the blood of his enemy."[83]

Even though Brunet saw the value in a radical Corsica ushering in the Revolution into the Mediterranean, he also saw a real risk of losing the island completely because of internal vendettas and costly conflicts, thus losing their strongest presence in the Mediterranean. To him, the pursuit of a radical foreign policy agenda was ideally balanced with practical goals and aims, understanding both the way the Revolution interacted with the various contexts in which it was received, and the costs and benefits of enforcing the radical Revolution through expensive military ventures.

On both accounts, Brunet was prescient. On May 15 the Directory of Corsica sent Delcher and Lacombe Saint-Michel a long letter exposing in minute detail the full catalog of Saliceti's crimes—that is, his lies, his intrigues, the offices he had held simultaneously, how he concealed his own instances of malfeasance and then accused others of them, his relations with the Arénas, how he destroyed one set of battalions to build up another with officers faithful only to him, his plot to attack Paoli, the faction he gathered around him, and more.[84] They were more than willing to acquiesce to the will of the Commission, sans Saliceti; however, the Commissioners remained united. Saliceti penned an extensive response to his critics that, though questionable in some of its justifications, nonetheless served to appease both the other Commissioners and the National Convention.[85]

The solidarity of the Commission and the refusal of the Directory to arrest Paoli and Pozzo forced it to take aggressive action to break the impasse. They announced that the entire administration based in Corte was illegal and appointed a temporary administration in Bastia.[86] Although

[82] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1797, 9 Mai, *Le général Brunet au ministre de la guerre.*

[83] Ibid.

[84] *Le Conseil général du département de la Corse aux commissaires Delcher et Lacombe S. Michel*, 15 Mai 1793, in Letteron, *Révolution Française*, II, 324–330.

[85] A.N., ADXVIIIc/354, No. 19, *Reponse du Citoyen Saliceti.*

[86] AN, ADXVIIIc/354, Constantini Correspondance, XXXII, "*Justification de département de Corse*," Paris, 3 Sept. 1793, 128.

the Commission had initially attempted to work within the exigencies of the Corsican situation, the vitriol emanating from the Revolutionary center, especially in the form of the arrest decree, forced it in to a situation that had no clear path for resolution. As Ferrandi and Constantini, the Députés Extraordinaires du Département de Corse, wrote to the Committee of Public Safety on June 11: "Without this decree (April 2) everything was tidy, and the business would have been fine; but now all is in disorder."[87]

Contrary to the orders of the Commission, the Directory of Corsica did not disband. Instead, the leading figures of the island took this as the sign to take drastic action in response. Pozzo di Borgo declared that the members of the administration should stand firm and defend themselves. If they left Corte, he said, they would be regarded as fugitives by the people and lose their authority and, with that, everything.

> My view was to break with the Commissioners, to take the barracks of Corte [there remained French troops stationed there] by surprise, to send off the regiment of Salis to Bastia, and to declare that the decree had been voted by an unprepared Convention, not to recognize any further the authority of the Convention's commissioners; to give our new government a provisional organization, to call the people of the interior to arms, to oppose force by force and to wait for the benefits of time.[88]

If this policy were not followed, Pozzo said that he would flee to Sardinia and urged other members of the administration to do likewise, because otherwise they would "perish under the revolutionary axe."[89]

On May 16, the General Council of the Department of Corsica held a public meeting in which the past month of interactions with the Commission was discussed. The general opinion expressed at this meeting was that Corsica was in fine shape prior to the arrival of the Commissioners, but that they, chiefly Saliceti, had caused considerable dissension and public disorder—contrary to the best interests of the island. To reestablish public safety, a Consulta, or meeting of representatives of the communes of Corsica, was called for May 26 at Corte.[90] At this point, the Consulta was mostly a formality, as in the eyes of the Commission and Paris, Paoli and Corsica in general were in direct opposition to the French

[87] AN, ADXVIIIc/354, Correspondance du C. Constantini, no. XIIbis.
[88] Quoted and translated in McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, 129–130.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Letteron, *Révolution Française,* II, 351–398.

Republic. Politically, despite a few echoes of Brunet's earlier call for peace and restraint, the National Convention declared Paoli a traitor and pronounced Corsica as in a state of open rebellion.

Delcher, mostly holed up in Bastia, had been in regular communication throughout May, requesting additional troops to secure the island and formulating various plans of attack.[91] Saliceti, Lacombe Saint-Michel, and none other than Napoleon, on May 23, had engaged in an expedition to capture Ajaccio. The mission failed miserably, largely because Pozzo had put loyal Corsican separatists from the mountains in the garrison and instructed them to shoot the French soldiers if they refused to fire on the ships.[92] The Consulta, then, was an afterthought in the minds of the Commission, as the situation had gone beyond conversation and was now a military matter. In June, the *Moniteur* wrote that Paoli had "cast aside his mask and put himself in open revolt. He has reestablished *l'ancien régime,* recalled the *émigrés*, etc."[93] This was not true, but as far as the French public and government was concerned, Corsica was opposed to the French Revolution, thus beyond the pale of politics and instead subject to conquest and violence.

For the Corsicans however, the Consulta was crucial in articulating exactly where they stood in relation to France and the Revolution. To this end, the result of the Consulta was a declaration that affirmed Corsica's loyalty to the French Republic rather than announcing a break: "[T]he people of the Department of Corsica, faithful to its oaths and promises, persist in its union with the French Republic, but always free and without oppression."[94] Indeed, even after the National Convention officially labeled him a traitor by in July and coming into open conflict with the French garrisons, Paoli insisted on remaining a French department and hoisting the tricolor flag.[95] Pozzo di Borgo later recounted:

[91] AMG cart. Corse, corr. 1792–1797, 24 Mai, *Delcher au Comite du Salut Public.*

[92] AN, ADXVIIIc/354. Correspondance Constantini, No. XVI. Paris 16 Juin 1793. Also see Chuquet, III, 131–143, for a detailed account of the military maneuvers of the island, with specific attention paid to Napoleon's role in the narrative.

[93] *Moniteur*, XVIII, 21.

[94] Letteron *Révolution Française*, I, 358. For the entire set of documents sent to the National Convention from the General Consulta, including what amounted to a list of demands for Corsica to remain part of France, and a full account of the General Consulta, see Letteron *Révolution Française*, I, 351–398.

[95] Paoli was declared a traitor by Barrere on 1 July 1793, in a speech before the National Convention.

> We preserved the French practices and the name of the Directory of the Department because we had no plan to separate from France and because we wanted to await the moment when some change and particularly the end of the Terror would have offered the opportunity for reconciliation.[96]

Corsica took advantage of the malleable political situation in the Mediterranean to explore a version of the French Revolution that contrasted sharply with that of Paris and privileged Corsican sovereignty over Revolutionary centralization.

Therefore, though they nominally remained part of France, by the end of the summer of 1793 Paoli, and by extension Corsica, were actively seeking another partner in their quest for self-determination. Despite the hope for autonomy, Paoli was under no illusion that such a goal was attainable without the assistance of a major power. The French remained entrenched in the various coastal fortresses and garrisons along the island, especially in the key cities of Bastia and Calvi. They lacked the strength to engage in any sort of incursions into the interior of Corsica or seriously to disrupt Paoli's operations, but they urgently requested more troops to retake the island.[97] Constantini in Paris noted that Corsica should prove significantly less of an obstacle for the Revolutionary armies than the Vendee, though his justification for this lay not in a tactical appraisal but a belief that the Corsican people would welcome the French.[98] The overall mood in Paris, however, was less than delighted with the prospect of reenacting 1769, when more than 50,000 troops were necessary to subdue the island.

Paoli too remembered 1769, and although he was confident in the short-term ability of the Corsicans to hold their own against the French garrisons, he recalled the ultimate failure of their resistance. Despite their brief fling in the 1750s and 1760s with Rousseau-approved independence, that particular experiment had ended in Paoli's exile and French occupation. Without diplomatic and military support for Paoli's vision of an autonomous Corsica, there was no reason to think the current situation would resolve any differently. The hope placed in the success of the Federalist revolts in mainland France waned as the summer of 1793

[96] Quoted and translated in McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo,* 138–139.

[97] Letteron, *Révolution Française*, II, 348–351, contains a selection of these requests, ranging from Genoa to Toulon to Paris.

[98] AN, ADXVIIIc/354. Correspondance de Constantini, N. XXII. Paris, 29 Juin 1793. At this point Constantini was desperately hoping to avoid being found culpable himself for the disaster that Corsica had become.

progressed and the Montagnards took firmer control of the Revolution. When it was able to spare the troops, Paoli had no illusions that he and his guerilla forces would be able to stand for long against the inevitable and vindictive invasion an outright military conflict with France would bring. The only difference in the results would be that, this time, Paoli would be sent to the guillotine instead of to London.

Just as the results of the independence of 1769 provided a cautionary tale for Paoli, however, they also provided an avenue for escape from the current situation. Even though there is no evidence of Paoli coming into communication with the English regarding Corsica prior to the summer of 1793, once it became clear that the relationship with France had soured, Paoli sent overtures to the King's ministers in Italy, specifically Francis Drake in Genoa.[99] The British fleet, under Admiral Samuel Hood, finally had made its way into the Mediterranean in June of 1793 under a broad, at times ambiguous, mandate that included giving aid to any French territory that requested assistance against the Revolution.[100] Hood also was in search of a reliable base of operations west of Gibraltar from which to engage the French in the Mediterranean. As the next chapter establishes, Hood's mission was fraught with complications, both military and diplomatic, but overall the coming of the British fleet served to swing the pendulum of power in the Western Mediterranean away from France and toward Britain.

Paoli quickly penned a proposal that highlighted the utility of Corsica to the British. He offered the ports of Corsica to the English in exchange for ridding them of the French and protection against future incursions. At this point, the proposal was vague and seemed to operate on the assumption that the British would interact with Corsica as an independent state. Possibly as a result of this assumption, there is no evidence that Drake ever forwarded the matter on to Hood, so in June and July of 1793, Paoli anxiously awaited a reply that would never come. In those early months, there was a possibility that Hood would have been interested in the offer, especially because of Corsica's proximity to Toulon, a major British objective. By July, the British fleet had settled in to a blockade of the main French

[99] BNA, FO 20/1. News of this reached France in early August 1793. *Un des représentants en Corse au Président de la Convention,* Calvi, 3 August 1793.

[100] Jennifer Mori, "The British Government and the Bourbon Restoration: The Occupation of Toulon, 1793," *The Historical Journal* 40, no. 3 (Sep 1997): 699–719. See also BNA, FO 20/1-3.

naval Mediterranean port, and while the prospect of ridding Corsican ports of the French would have been somewhat daunting, the utility of those ports also would have been quite enticing. By August, however, the situation had changed. Toulon, engaged in a Federalist revolt of its own and stuck between the rock of the besieging French Revolutionary Army and the hard place of the British blockading fleet, chose to risk siding with the latter, giving the British control not only of the most important French Mediterranean port but also of most of the French Mediterranean fleet.

Corsica then, from May of 1793 until the Revolutionary armies forced the British to abandon Toulon and turn south in December, considered itself a part of France, but in opposition to the Convention. As the situation settled, Paoli and Pozzo administered the island reasonably effectively and entirely independently, although the French garrisons sent reports back to Paris requesting reinforcements that were impossible to provide given the situation in Toulon. Little of particular note occurred on the island during these months, as the establishment of an autonomous administration under Paoli struggled with factionalism, as had ever been the case with Corsica. Externally, the shadow of the British occupation of Toulon dominated the thoughts and plans of the British, French, and Italians. Should Britain retain possession of the port, the British could deal with Corsica almost as an afterthought once the Revolutionary wars ended. Indeed, there is some evidence that Spain began to make inquiries about acquiring the island as indemnification, though little would come of it. Corsica took advantage of the conceptual space provided by the Revolution, and the physical space provided by distance from Paris, to actively participate in the interpretation and implementation of a plurality of Revolutionary and Counter-Revolutionary perspectives.

CHAPTER 4

Britain and the First Coalition in the Western Mediterranean in 1793

By the summer of 1793, Corsica had thrown off the yoke of French Revolutionary rule, further complicating an already unsettled political dynamic in the Western Mediterranean. On a diplomatic level, the French were being pushed back, often by a mixture of their own ineptitude and the agency of the small states of the region. Militarily, however, the Revolution remained dominant. The French Army sat in Nice, and the fleet at Toulon was an ever-present threat to the Mediterranean powers. Even though Piedmont–Sardinia, Naples, and now Corsica had come into direct conflict with the Revolutionary forces, they had little ability to persist without military assistance from the major powers of Europe, specifically Britain. Tuscany refused to break neutrality without a compelling reason to do so, and Genoa maintained the façade of neutrality while providing material assistance to the French. The Barbary Coast states offered no resistance to the French, gladly maintaining their pecuniary relationship. Even as Federalist revolts began to break out in southern France, the Mediterranean arena remained within the French sphere of influence.

The formation of the First Coalition in early 1793 provided the means to contest this influence, but little motivation.[1] Austria was in no position to affect the Mediterranean theater and had few direct interests on the coast

[1] On the First Coalition, see Charles Esdaile, *The French Wars, 1792–1815* (Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 2001); Owen Connelly, *The Wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon, 1792–1815* (Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 2006). For a broad view, see Paul Schroeder's

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J. Meeks, *France, Britain, and the Struggle for the Revolutionary Western Mediterranean*, War, Culture and Society, 1750–1850,
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to motivate them, invested as they were in the Netherlands. Spain, meanwhile, attempted to counteract French influence in the Mediterranean in May of 1793, but an outbreak of disease ravaged their already meager naval personnel and forced their fleet to return to Cartagena.[2] This state of affairs left the British with the vast majority of responsibility for the war against the French Revolution in the Western Mediterranean, but they were also keenly interested in the Caribbean as they sought to expand their colonial holdings even further.

At first, not even the specter of Revolution could bring the Mediterranean in from the liminal space between colony and Continent. By the end of 1793, however, the radicalization of the Revolution demanded a response from the First Coalition. Because of their naval strength, the British were at the forefront of this response, but just as the French struggled in Corsica to define what it meant to be "Revolutionary," so too did the British struggled to reconcile the tension between fighting a war against France in a traditional fashion predicated on indemnification, and fighting a war against the French Revolution in defense of international stability.[3]

War broke out between Britain and Revolutionary France in February of 1793. This marked a departure for Britain from its stance on the French Revolution since 1789. Prior to this breaking point brought on by the Regicide and the opening of the Scheldt River in defiance of international convention, the Pitt administration in London was content to take advantage of the opportunities produced by the chaos in France to further British commercial interests at the expense of their traditional enemy.[4] In

masterful *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[2] British National Archives (hereafter BNA), FO 72/27, Lord St. Helens to Grenville, 19 July 1793. Lord St. Helens reported 3500 sick landed at Cartagena.

[3] On British foreign policy during this period, see Jeremy Black, *Debating Foreign Policy in Eighteenth Century Britain* (Ashgate, 2011); Jennifer Mori, *Britain in the Age of the French Revolution* (Harlow: Longman, 2000); John C. Clarke, *British Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, 1782–1865* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1989); D. B. Horn, *Great Britain and Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (Gloucestershire, UK: Clarendon Press, 1967); Michael Duffy, "British policy in the War Against Revolutionary France," in Colin Jones, ed., *Britain and Revolutionary France: Conflict, Subversion and Propaganda* (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1983), 1–4.

[4] C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830* (Reading, MA: Longman, 1989). In this shift, the Mediterranean was only of limited importance, with the British mainly concerned with the safety of the Levant Trading Company and providing a counterweight to the French fleet at Toulon.

fact, the advent of the French Revolution was initially a welcome boon to the Pitt ministry, though general reception was more complicated. There were those who saw the French Revolution as an unmitigated evil, chief among these being Edmund Burke. For Burke, the French Revolution was an assault on civilization, on private property, and on authority. The Church and the Crown were the foundations of society, and if taken away as they were in France, it was felt that civilization would crumble.[5]

Even though Burke may have ultimately been correct, the Pitt administration did not share his view. For the Marquess of Carmarthen, the Foreign Minister in the early years of the French Revolution, the failure of the French to maintain their own alliances opened up room in the global system of diplomacy for Britain to usurp more of France's position. Meanwhile, for Pitt the continued power of the British on a commercial level was positive, so there seemed little need to take any action against the Revolution. Pitt was even in tentative favor of aspects of Republicanism, and welcomed the push for a constitutional monarchy during the first years of the Revolution. The caveat, however, and where he found himself in agreement with Burke, was that he said France must respect the international code of conduct. For Pitt, it was not Church and Crown that were the foundations of civilization; rather, it was international law, both written and unwritten. So long as this new France behaved in a reasonable fashion on the international stage, a reversion to the Old Regime was not necessary.[6]

The opening of the Scheldt marked the end to Pitt's tolerance of the Revolution. The French decision to open this river in the occupied Austrian Netherlands, so central to the European balance of power since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, marked a fundamental break with the traditional European political system. Nevertheless, this did not equate to a clearly defined relationship with the Bourbon Restoration, the French émigrés, or French Republicanism. Pragmatism, not ideology, dictated Pitt's early relationship with the French Revolution, and this did not change in 1793.

However frustrating it was for Burke, Pitt was not in any way planning for a Bourbon Restoration 20 years in the future—he was anticipating an

[5] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1999.

[6] Jennifer Mori, "The British Government and the Bourbon Restoration: The Occupation of Toulon, 1793," *The Historical Journal* 40, no. 3 (Sep 1997): 699–719; Jeremy Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies: Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987).

end to the war within months, and he struggled with the form that victory should take that would best benefit Britain in both the short term and long term. Returning balance to the international order, and assuring British supremacy in that order, was of paramount importance to Pitt. The actual shape of that international order was certainly related to a Restoration of the balance of power; however, it was by no means a wholesale recreation of pre-Revolutionary Europe. In fact, he was concerned with much the same issues as the Convention in Paris: the division of executive, legislative, judicial, and administrative powers within the French state.[7]

Within this anticipation of reforming France, he also sought territorial indemnification in the traditional vein of eighteenth-century warfare and a way to maintain the balance of power. To achieve these ends he needed a government with which he and the rest of the international community could treat. Thus, Pitt attempted to operate between a distaste for the Old Regime Bourbons, a fear of the disorder of the new Republic, and a desire to see Britain's traditional interests furthered.

Of course, despite his best efforts Pitt was not able to unilaterally dictate his vision for British policy. The internal debates of its policymakers for or against the Revolution have been examined in detail elsewhere, but they remain relevant in that they are reflected, however murkily, in the eventual formation of British Mediterranean policy. Pitt stood between two extremes: the Foxite Whigs who were in support of the Revolution as a template for Parliamentary reform in Britain and the growing supporters of Burke who favored a complete Restoration. This latter group made a concerted effort to join Pitt's government, and among them was a member of parliament (MP) by the name of Gilbert Elliot.[8] Elliot was one of the most important British figures in the Western Mediterranean, eventually serving as Vice-Roy of Corsica. Initially, Burke saw Elliot's acceptance by Pitt as excellent, foreseeing that his own views would be promulgated; however, as will be shown, the middle ground between Revolution and Counter-Revolution proved unavoidable, at least in the Western Mediterranean arena.[9]

[7] Mori, "The Bourbon Restoration," 702.

[8] Sir Gilbert to Lady Elliot, 18 Dec. 1792, printed in *Life and Letters of Gilbert Elliot, First Earl of Minto,* ed. Nina, countess of Minto, London, 1874, vol. II, 80. Hereafter cited as *Life and Letters.*

[9] F. O'Gorman, *The Whig Party and the French Revolution* (London: Macmillan, 1967); L.G. Mitchell, *Charles James Fox and the Disintegration of the Whig Party, 1782–1794* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); Jennifer Mori, "The Bourbon Restoration"; Roger

In terms of the progression of the war itself, the strategy of the Coalition in 1793 stood in contrast to that of the Austro-Prussian campaign of 1792. This earlier campaign was motivated by a desire to end the Revolution and restore the former regime in Paris, while in 1793 the Coalition's strategy was directed towards the conquest of French border provinces—Flanders, Alsace-Lorraine, the southeast and Perpignan—for future annexation to the existing territories of the allied powers. British plans for the creation of a secure Europe in 1793 were predicated on the creation of buffer zones on the French periphery, as well as taking Paris. By August of 1793, Pitt had drawn up a preliminary war plan for 1794:

> To be left on the frontier [Flanders]: 30,000
> To advance from Flanders towards Paris: 50,000
> To land at Le Havre and advance from thence to Paris: 50,000
> To attack Brest: 50,000
> To attack Toulon: 50,000[10]

According to Pitt, these troops would come mostly from the other members of the Coalition, while Britain provided the funding and the naval power. This plan would prove problematic on several levels. Not only did it arouse suspicions among Britain's allies—chiefly Spain, who wondered about the British designs on the West Indies—but also among the *émigré* French. Lord Auckland, British ambassador at The Hague, was told by the Marechal de Castries: "The combined armies should be satisfied in restoring order and the ancient monarchy to France, and should not seek any indemnity for themselves."[11] The British government disagreed, however, with George III writing to Grenville in April 1793: "France must be greatly circumscribed before we can think of treating with that dangerous and faithless nation."[12]

Wells, "English society and revolutionary politics in the 1790s: The case for insurrection," in Mark Philp, ed., *The French Revolution in British Popular Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 189–190.

[10] BNA FO 30/8/195, 28 Aug. 1793.

[11] Acklaund Correspondance, II, Auckland to Grenville, 18 May 1793, 62–63; G. Laurent, "*Pitt et les projets de l'émigration en* 1793," *Annales historiques de la Révolution Française*, II (1925), 164–168.

[12] Duffy, 'British policy', 13–4; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts of B. Fortescue Preserved at Dropmore* (Hereafter HMC *Dropmore*), part V (10 vols., 1894–1927) II (1894), George III to Grenville, 27 April 1793.

Therefore, when Pitt set to the task of envisioning an end game to the war with France, he realized that a weakened Republic likely would be an easier state to deal with than the Bourbons, especially in terms of demanding territorial indemnification. It was a difficult proposition to fight *for* the return of the Bourbon monarchy, while simultaneously informing them that they were going to be losing territory at the conclusion of the successful campaign. Even though Pitt realized the impossibility of dealing with the radical Revolution, when it came to establishing a post-war France, Pitt envisioned one that would not be in a position to debate British acquisition of colonial or continental lands formerly held by the Bourbons. He thus maintained a lukewarm relationship with the Bourbons and a noncommittal stance on the status of France after the Revolution ended.

Pitt sought "indemnification for the past and security for the future," and should that take the form of a constitutional monarchy, as per 1791, he would be content.[13] He pursued the war in a mostly traditional fashion, with an aim to restoring the traditional system; however, he saw as its end a severely circumscribed Bourbon monarchy that would, paradoxically, fundamentally alter the balance of power. The incongruence between these two positions would not last the year, as events in the Mediterranean forced the British to reexamine their relationship with both their enemies and allies.

When the British entered the war in February of 1793, the Sardinian expedition had just failed and Corsica shortly would be on the path to rebellion. Although the failure of the Sardinian expedition and the subsequent loss of control the French experienced in the Mediterranean over the course of the spring and summer of 1793 may seem, in hindsight, to be an indicator of the balance of power shifting away from France, this would not have occurred without the introduction of the British fleet. The French Army of Italy was still in control of Nice, and though the Coalition hoped to push them out of Savoy, there was in reality little hope of doing so. This was in large part because of Genoa and Tuscany keeping the Army well supplied with grain, coerced as they were with the proximity of the Army in Nice and the French fleet of 16 ships of the

[13] W. R. Fryer, *Republic or Restoration in France?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 23; Robert Griffiths, *Le centre perdu: Mallouet et les 'monarchiens' dans la révolution française* (Grenoble: Presses universitaires de Grenoble, 1983), 66–69.

line sitting in Toulon, and protected by the shield of passive neutrality.[14] Although some of the Italian states may have sought neutrality and, in the case of Rome and Naples, actively resisted French influence, the reality of the situation was that without a counterbalance, none of the minor states of the Western Mediterranean had any hope of opposing France in the long term.

Pitt and Dundas in London recognized the need for a Mediterranean fleet and to this end placed Viscount Samuel Hood in charge of the gathering of the Mediterranean fleet in Spithead. Hood was a well-respected, capable admiral who had been serving as an able seaman since the 1740s. In the opinion of Horatio Nelson, who served under him in the Mediterranean, Hood was the greatest seaman of that generation. Hood's personality was well-suited for leadership, as he was stern and disciplined as well as well-grounded in his own opinions. He was ambitious in his service to the Crown and was not paralyzed by indecision while waiting for approval from London; this was a good thing because it took up to three weeks for messages to reach London from the Mediterranean and vice versa. Nevertheless, the same qualities that made him a capable and successful admiral also put him in a difficult position in the Mediterranean, where he served as the chief statesman as well as military leader. In an arena that needed both tact and cooperation, Hood often alienated both his subordinates and equals.[15]

Circumstances conspired to severely delay the departure of the Mediterranean fleet. The first problem was a lack of manpower. Back in December of 1792, when it became evident that war with France likely was inevitable, supplies for 20,000 seamen and 5000 marines were provided by Parliament, after the armed forces had been cut down to a total of 17,000 troops earlier in the year. On February 11, 1793, Parliament granted supplies for an additional 20,000 seamen and 4000 marines; however, even though the supplies were provided, actually finding men to use the supplies was a more difficult endeavor.[16] In addition to guarding against Jacobin incursions, the navy was tasked with assisting British allies in the north, especially Holland, protect trade from privateers and

[14] For the list of French ships in the Mediterranean, see BNA ADM 1/98. For the British complaints concerning shipments of grain, see FO 28/6 for Genoa, FO 67/11 for Sardinia, and FO 79/8 for Tuscany.

[15] J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon*, 10.

[16] HMC *Dropmore*, II, 403.

the French navy, watch the French ports, and attempt to counteract the French presence in the Mediterranean.

Besides these European requirements, the colonial needs were great, especially in the West Indies. In February, a French squadron succeeded in setting sail for the West Indies from Brest, and a British squadron, destined for Hood's Mediterranean fleet, was immediately set in pursuit. This need to protect the British interests in the West Indies led to a further delay for Hood and British interests in the Mediterranean. That the Mediterranean was a lower priority was readily acknowledged by Pitt, who when deciding to send the squadron wrote to Grenville concerning how it would inevitably "retard sending twenty sail[ing ships] to the Mediterranean for about a fortnight beyond the time they would have gone otherwise"; he said that this was acceptable given the current aims of the government.[17]

Beyond simply placing the Mediterranean on a relatively lower scale compared to the Continent or the colonies, Pitt also placed trade as a higher priority within both the Mediterranean and the broader Empire. Pitt saw the interests of Britain as overseas, not continental, except insofar as continental conquest would afford colonial opportunity. The instructions given to Hood on May 18 begin with a statement of purpose for the Mediterranean fleet: "Whereas the King has thought fit to order a powerful fleet to be employed in the Mediterranean for the purpose of affording effectual protection to the commerce of H.M.'s subjects in those seas."[18]

Dealing a blow to France and seeking to engage the French Mediterranean fleet was then also included as a desirable aim, but when Toulon was referenced, it was seen as a virtually impregnable refuge for the French fleet. Hood's orders in regard to Toulon were to "watch the motions of the French fleet" and to engage himself in protecting trade, not to take the port or city. Finally, Hood also was ordered to assist, however possible, both in the formation of alliances with Spain, Portugal, Naples, and Sardinia and "to co-operate as far as circumstances may permit."[19]

[17] HMC *Dropmore*, II, 404. Michael Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower: The British Expeditions to the West Indies during the French Revolutionary Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon*, 11.

[18] For a concise breakdown of these orders, see J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon*, Appendix A, "Admiralty Instructions to Vice-Admiral Lord Hood," 95. For the corresponding instructions at the National Archives, see BNA ADM 2/124 "Additional Instructions to Lord Hood," 138.

[19] Ibid.

Thus, in his instructions to Hood, Pitt clearly aligned the priorities of the fleet with protecting trade and otherwise practicing traditional warfare as a higher priority than working with the Royalists or attempting to restore Bourbons to power. Further evidence of this was that Hood's fleet was ordered to depart England in waves dictated by the needs of the convoys, in no way in response to the rapidly changing political situation in France or the Mediterranean.[20] He sailed on May 23, significantly later than he and the British consuls in the Mediterranean would have liked. All told, the decision to stagger the ships with the convoys, and the delays precipitated by that decision, retarded the arrival at Gibraltar of the Mediterranean fleet by about a month and seriously altered the situation in the Mediterranean to the disadvantage of the allies.

One key example of this was the delay in replacing Consul Logie with Consul Mace in Algiers. Logie had made significant personal enemies in Algeria and so was to be replaced by Mace in February of 1793. Mace was unable to make it to Algiers, however, as he needed an escort from the fleet to get by the French squadron protecting France's grain trade in Algiers. This left Britain without a representative in Algiers for the crucial early months of the war against France. Mace would not land in Algiers because of further complications, including an outbreak of the plague, until January of 1794.[21]

The failure of the British fleet to appear caused no small amount of consternation in the Mediterranean, and it is worth noting that only Piedmont–Sardinia made an alliance with Britain prior to the sailing of the fleet. This treaty was signed on April 25 and bound the House of Savoy to maintain an Army of 50,000 men. In return, they would receive an annual subsidy of £200,000 and support from the British fleet, primarily in guaranteeing trade and protecting coasts. With this alliance, Pitt, Dundas, and Grenville were pursuing the same course of action regularly taken by the British during the eighteenth century—that is, subsidizing other nations' forces while providing support with their Navy.

The two states also mutually guaranteed their territories, a clause that implied an attempt to recover Savoy and Nice for King Victor Amadeus.[22] It took until 1814 to fulfill this clause, but Piedmont–Sardinia in 1793

[20] J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon*, Appendix C, 104, "Logs of the Victory, Britannia, Princess Royal, St. George, Windsor Castle."

[21] BNA FO 3/7.

[22] BNA FO 12/11, Trevor to Grenville, 25 April 1793.

had significant problems satisfying her side of the bargain as well, to the severe detriment of the British. There also was tension between Austria, the other leading member of the Coalition, and the court at Turin, which meant that Britain served as the chief arbiter and common thread linking the other powers in the early days of the First Coalition.

Hood's fleet sailed on May 23, and two days later the Spanish and British established a treaty. This treaty was largely born out of necessity, as neither the British nor the Spanish had a great deal of respect or trust for the other. Traditionally, the two powers had been enemies, and even as recently as 1790 and the Nootka Sound Crisis, they were in direct colonial competition.[23] The Spanish would have much preferred a traditional alliance with France against Great Britain, but the outrage caused by the Regicide, as well as the French radicalization of their foreign policy, made this an impossibility.

As it happened, Great Britain and Spain agreed to work together in the Mediterranean to prevent trade between France and the remaining neutrals and to protect each other's trade whenever possible.[24] This was hardly a resounding declaration of support, and on May 29, four days after the signing of the Anglo-Spanish treaty, Lord St. Helens, the ambassador at Madrid, described the situation in a letter to Lord Grenville:

> … [T]he truth is that it is hardly possible to obtain anything from these people but through the medium of their fears, so that they are infinitely more intractable and difficult to deal with as friends than as enemies. Our chief antagonist is the Minister of the Marine, M. Valdes, who, in common with but too many other persons, has persuaded himself that the secret aim of Great Britain in the present war is to engage the French and Spaniards to batter each other's ships to pieces and so secure to herself in future an uncontested superiority over both.…[25]

Spain and Great Britain began their alliance at odds with each other, and this relationship did not improve. Although Pitt was concerned about the radicalization of French foreign policy, he failed to grasp the impact of his

[23] BNA FO 72/27, Lord St. Helens to Grenville, 25 May 1793. The overall dynamics of the relationship between Spain, France, and Great Britain is best explored in Barbara Stein and Stanley Stein, *Edge of Crisis: War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789–1808* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

[24] BNA FO 72/27, Lord St. Helens to Grenville, 25 May 1793.

[25] Ibid., Lord St. Helens to Grenville, 29 May 1793.

foreign policy pursuits on an increasingly unstable Europe. The balance of power had become malleable and indemnification would become increasingly complex and problematic.

To complete this Coalition of the barely willing, Naples did not sign a treaty with the British until July 12, by which point Hood's fleet had been in the Mediterranean for almost two weeks. The treaty signed by Sir William Hamilton was similar in language to that with Sardinia, but it stipulated the provision of 6000 troops to assist the British in the Mediterranean, as well as four sail-of-the-line and eight smaller craft. The British, meanwhile, were bound to maintain "*une flotte* respectable," establish naval supremacy, protect Neapolitan commerce at sea, and pay for the transport and upkeep of the troops and ships provided.[26] This effectively put Britain at the crux of the First Coalition in the Mediterranean, theoretically aided by the other powers who often distrusted not only Britain but also each other. The traditional forms of international politics grounded this distrust, as well as the differing and conflicting goals of the various parties. Britain pledged to protect the commerce of all parties, although both the British and the other powers were well aware of the desire of the British to increase their commercial influence. The struggle for the Western Mediterranean therefore existed as much within the First Coalition as between the First Coalition and the French.

When Hood finally did enter the Mediterranean on June 28, he immediately made an attempt to alter the status quo. From Gibraltar, he sent Byam Martin of the "Tisiphone" with several other ships to Tripoli with Consul Perkins Magra aboard.[27] On the surface, this was an attempt to secure the friendship of Tunis in order to obtain supplies for the British and cut French support in the Mediterranean. British relations with North Africa were tenuous at the time while the French were welcomed openly, making this overture a sound strategic move.[28] Hood, however, had an ulterior motive as well. He was aware that the French had a significant presence in Tunis and sent his ships in an attempt to provoke the French admiral in to attacking the British in a neutral port. Had this succeeded, Hood intended to use it as an excuse to "make a general sweep of the French ships of war out of every neutral port." However, after seeing the

[26] BNA FO 165/162, Hamilton to Grenville, 12 July 1793.

[27] BNA ADM 2/124, FO 77/3.

[28] MS Anderson, "Great Britain and the Barbary States in the Eighteenth Century," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 29 (1956): 87–107.

French ships, Martin and his superior officer Lumisdaine on the *Iris* both fled back to Hood, who was livid and had them court-martialed for upsetting his plans.[29]

Hood finally reached sight of Toulon on July 15, 1793. From his station off the port he went about carrying out his instructions. As far as Hood was concerned, there was little he could actively do given the current situation, other than fulfill his orders by harassing the French in Toulon and protecting British trade. When faced with a request from Admiral de Revel of Sardinia for assistance in retaking Nice, Hood replied: "I shall feel myself extremely happy to avail myself of any and every opportunity that may offer, of giving the full force of the Fleet under my command in support of any plan… for the recovery of Nice. But I am at present unable to see, how far I can effectually be of use."[30] Lord Mulgrave, who was sent by London to Turin to affect whatever movement he could against the French, echoed Hood's sentiment, noting that it would take considerable cooperation to retake Nice, and that this cooperation was not forthcoming.[31]

Although Hood attempted to use the British navy to maneuver against the French, the arrival of the British fleet to the Mediterranean served as the long-awaited sign to the British ministers in the Italian states that they had some leverage to work against the policy of passive neutrality that kept the French Army at Nice well supplied with grain. To return to the tale of John Augustus Hervey, the British Minister in Tuscany and an ardent Counter-Revolutionary in the vein of Burke, Hervey took the opportunity of the anticipated appearance of the British fleet to send several threatening notes to the Grand Duke concerning the policy of providing grain to France. Although Hervey had no direct instruction from London, he was sure (and communicated thus) that the British Cabinet was furious with the actions of Tuscany.[32] Much to Hervey's dismay, when he did hear from Grenville, the reply was that it was more important to maintain peace with the Courts of Italy than to pursue his own personal agenda against Manfredini.[33]

[29] See J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood*, 15. They were ultimately acquitted.
[30] BNA FO 67/12, Hood to de Revel, 10 August 1793.
[31] Ibid., Mulgrave to Hood, 13 August 1793.
[32] BNA FO 79/8 Hervey to Serristori, 23 May 1793.
[33] Ibid., Grenville to Hervey, 5 July 1793.

This frustrated Hervey immensely as he was now entirely convinced that Manfredini was a Jacobin at heart and was working against the interests of the British, in favor of the French. The issue of supplying grain to Nice was an especially sore point because, in Hervey's estimation, the Tuscans had sent the Army of Italy more than 700,000 sacks of grain.[34] These provisions permitted the Army to stay at strength and stymied the efforts of the Coalition on that front. Hervey was also concerned about the unresolved issue of French passage through Tuscany to attack Rome, a fact exacerbated by the Austrian capture of the erstwhile Revolutionary diplomat Semonville in August of 1793. They found him with documents that seemed to indicate Manfredini's complicity with the invasion scheme, though after traveling to Vienna to answer these charges the Major Domo was acquitted.[35]

To the extent that Hervey's concerns were with the military balance of power in the Mediterranean, he was confident that he was of one mind with Hood concerning his preference for belligerence, despite the orders from Grenville to behave peaceably. Thus, when Hood finally entered the Mediterranean, Hervey decided to make his move against La Flotte and Manfredini. He had not corresponded with Manfredini following the threatening note that he had been approbated for by Grenville, going so far as to feign illness in an effort to not weaken his position, which he felt was strong regardless of Grenville's censure.[36]

When he finally did reopen lines of communication, it was with a memorial (i.e., statement of facts) that did not have any substance from London; instead, it was based entirely on Hervey's personal observations and an extremely loose interpretation of the spirit of Grenville's letter. This memorial indicated that Britain was willing to use force to ensure Tuscany's neutrality and to stop the grain trade with France, focusing

[34] Richard Long, "The Relations of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany with Revolutionary France, 1790–1799" (Florida State University Dissertation, 1972), 96.

[35] MAE, Corres. Polit., 145bis, *Toscane*, 4 June 1793. These documents mention nothing of Tuscan complicity.

[36] BNA FO 79/8 Hervey to Grenville, 31 Aug. 1793. Though he does not admit to feigning the illness that hypothetically prevented him from deciphering Hood's instructions, his "illness" did not prevent him from deciphering and corresponding with several other Ministers during that same period, perhaps most notably William Hamilton in Naples. They jointly made plans to force their respective French counterparts from Naples and Tuscany, although Hamilton admittedly had an easier time of it. BNA FO 528/7 features the correspondence in question, specifically, Hamilton to Hervey, 4 June 1793, and Udney to Hervey, 17 June 1793.

on the stick rather than the carrot as Grenville had urged. Although this would not necessarily have had any significant effect on its own, it corresponded with Hood showing himself off the coast of Italy on his arrival to the Mediterranean and on his way to Toulon. In Tuscany this consisted of two frigates sailing into Livorno.[37]

There is no evidence to suggest that Hood intended the appearance of the frigates to supplement Hervey's foreign policy plans at this point in 1793. Rather, Hood had dispatched ships to nearly every significant port in the Western Mediterranean as an announcement that the British were now powers to be reckoned with in the region.[38] This did not, in July and August of 1793, equate to an announcement that the British were demanding an end to the neutrality of Tuscany, or were explicitly offering protection. Rather, it was a statement from Hood regarding his ability to protect British trade interests. Hervey, however, used the appearance of those frigates to enforce the former perception.

When Manfredini anxiously inquired concerning the purpose of the frigates (his last correspondence with Hervey having been the threatening notes of May and June), Hervey responded with silence.[39] This silence persisted despite repeated, increasingly desperate, appeals from Manfredini for information. The Tuscan Major Domo even went so far as to send the Swedish and Austrian ambassadors to Hervey to find out the British's stance on Tuscany. Finally, Manfredini informed Hervey that should Britain request it, Tuscany would break off all relations with France, expel La Flotte, and essentially agree to any terms to prevent Livorno from being attacked, as long as they could declare that such action had been demanded by Great Britain.[40]

Hervey was delighted. He had been able to nearly complete the destruction of Tuscan neutrality by issuing vague, unfounded threats, followed by silence, assisted unknowingly by Hood. He wrote to Grenville: "However irregular may have been the first steps which I was led to take in this affair, I trust the issue will be thought as honourable to His Majesty as it may be advantageous to the common cause."[41] Tuscany was still nominally neutral, but Hervey had used the appearance of Hood's

[37] BNA FO 79/8 Hervey to Grenville, 31 Aug. 1793. This dispatch to Grenville contains Hervey's extensive recounting of all of the events in question.

[38] J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon*, Appendices B and C.

[39] BNA FO 79/8, Hervey to Grenville, 31 August 1793.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

fleet to eliminate the ability of the Tuscan government to persist in its place on the periphery, and to push them towards the British. The case of Tuscany would soon get significantly more complicated, as the French loss of Toulon would leave the French Revolution with even less influence in the Mediterranean, introduce British-protected Toulon as a new entity in the region, and increase the boldness not just of Hervey but also of British policy in general.

Similarly, Genoa found itself in an awkward position when Hood's fleet entered the Mediterranean. Sir Francis Drake, the British Minister in Genoa, had been attempting without success to curtail Genoese shipments of corn to Nice, just like Hervey. In the case of Drake and Genoa, however, the appearance of British ships did not coincide with either strong threats of violence or promises of protection. The *Aigle* under Captain Inglesfield entered into the port at Genoa with orders to attempt to assist a Sardinian frigate damaged by the French. When he arrived at the port, Inglesfield noted the presence of the French frigate *La Modeste* and attempted to leave. Evidently, at that point the *La Modeste* came alongside the *Aigle* and prevented her from leaving.[42] This was in direct contravention of standard neutral practice, which would have allowed the *Aigle* a 24-hour head start to avoid being trapped by the *Modeste*.

Drake reported this incident to Hood, who instructed Drake to press firmly for appropriate actions from the Genoese.[43] Drake did so, but the Genoese ignored him entirely. Demonstrating just how stretched Hood's forces were, he did little else about the matter in August, other than ordering William Hamilton in Naples to request two of the promised Neapolitan ships to enter the harbor at Genoa in order to protect allied trade.[44] From the Genoese side, there was little they could do. While they were nominally neutral, like Tuscany, and were within their stated neutral rights to trade passively with France, the reality of the situation was less equal. Tuscany realized its inability to stop the French Army should they have decided to cross Tuscan territory on their way to Rome—Genoa was significantly more helpless, both closer in proximity to the Army of Italy, and likely was without any support from Tuscany or any other Italian

[42] BNA ADM 1/3841, 22 July 1793.

[43] BNA ADM 1/3841, Drake to Hood, 20 July 1793; ADM 1/3841, Hood to Drake, ADM 1/391 3 August 1793.

[44] BNA ADM 1/3841, Hood to Hamilton, 20 August 1793.

power should France invade.[45] In addition, the Genoese had close financial ties to France, making it both militarily and economically unfeasible to side against it. When Drake approbated the Genoese government for its failure to maintain neutrality, he did not offer any support against the French. The irony of the situation lay in the fact that Britain would soon be asking Genoa to leave behind the very neutrality they claimed the French had violated.

On one level then, the Coalition interacted with the minor powers in the Mediterranean in a similar fashion to how they had in past decades. In 1793, the French Revolution had caused little change: Tuscany, Genoa, and Tunis were simply pieces in the game between the Coalition and the French, settled on the margins of the calculations of both Hood and the policymakers in London. The main consideration in the Mediterranean was commerce, not the practice of international politics. This stands in contrast to the actions of the French discussed in the previous two chapters, where the Revolution sought to bring the minor powers into direct political conversation and contact with France and the Revolution. The actions of Lord Hervey in Tuscany point to the beginnings of this tactic for the British, and the adaptation of their shift towards the commercial into a shift towards the political or ideological.

Instead of simply protecting British commerce in the Mediterranean, Hervey saw it as his mission to protect the very nature of international politics from the ravages of the radical Revolutionaries. This would then reach its fullest expression in the British relationship with Corsica, examined in the next chapter. In the interim, however, the series of events that took place on the French Mediterranean coast between August and December of 1793 forced the Coalition, and especially the British, to come face to face with the changing nature of their campaign in the Western Mediterranean. On August 29, 1793, Toulon opened its port to the British fleet in an effort to stave off the advancing Republican Army. Overnight it seemed that the Revolution had given way to Counter-Revolution as the dominant force in the region, and commercial interests had given way to a more ideological tone, though not surprisingly the reality was far more complicated.

[45] René Boudard, *Gênes et la France dans la deuxième moitié du XVIII siècle* (Paris: Mouton, 1962).

Until the middle of 1793, the Jacobins controlled Toulon, and the fleet in its harbor answered to Paris.[46] Toulon was an instrument for radicalization, as seen with the denunciations of Paoli from Lucien Bonaparte, and more broadly with the coercive power of the French Mediterranean fleet. In July of 1793, however, Toulon reacted against the radicalization of the Revolution, and this in turn had a dramatic impact on the nature and practice of international politics in the Mediterranean. Although this is often lumped in with the larger Federalist revolts, it also is an example of local conflict and politics affecting the international dynamic. Since the beginning of 1793, the Jacobin party in Toulon had slowly been losing influence, and this culminated in a municipal revolution on July12 and 13.

With the Jacobins overthrown, Toulon entirely repudiated the Montagnards in the Convention. They aimed to establish a new representative body at Bourges rather than in "depraved and corrupt" Paris. On July 19, the anti-Jacobins exerted their influence over the navy and disregarded an order to establish a naval blockade of fellow Federalists in Marseille. They declared all legislation passed in the Convention since the end of May null and void, especially the Constitution of July 1793. There were even the beginnings of a White Terror, where the ruling council tried and executed about 40 radical Revolutionaries.[47] These changes served to almost entirely subvert the function of Toulon as a key part of the propagation of the radical Revolution into the Mediterranean.

This casting off of Jacobin rule, however, was part of a long struggle for municipal ascendancy that predated the Revolution. In many ways a similar narrative to Corsica, the Toulonese were decidedly anti-Jacobin by the middle of 1793 but not necessarily Counter-Revolutionary. Despite this, as with Corsica, the Montagnards were quick to cast any disagreement with the Convention as purely Counter-Revolutionary. The Toulonese rejoined with a claim that "only traitors and impostors can possibly conceive of us as counter-revolutionaries, in league with the English or the religious fanatics in the Vendee." Then, in July and early August, they did maintain loyalty to the Revolution as they perceived it. They enforced

[46] The three main authorities on the Toulon affair are J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922); Paul Cottin, *Toulon et les Anglais en 1793* (Paris: P. Ollendorf, 1898); and more recently Malcolm Crook, *Toulon in War and Revolution* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1991), especially Chap. 6. The former two also feature extensive appendices including the relevant source material from both British and French sources.

[47] Crook, 136–138.

decrees passed prior to the rise of the Montagnards. Speeches were made that affirmed the tenants of the early Revolution, and at least initially there was little hint of Royalism.

Crucial also is the fact that at no point did they act to cut off supplies to the Army of Italy, and in fact were diligent in their responsibilities to maintain that Army.[48] This dissonance was not sustainable, as the Jacobins in power were quick to react against the rising tide of Federalism. General Brunet in the Army of Italy was sympathetic to the Toulonese and appreciative of their continued provisions; however, when the Convention ordered that he send a detachment to the city to enforce its will, he complied. The main force tasked with bringing the recalcitrant Mediterranean Federalist cities into line was that of General Carteaux. By August 21, he had occupied Aix. Three days later Carteaux conquered Marseilles and purged the anti-Jacobins from the city. He then set his sights on Toulon.

Thus, although the Federalist revolt of Toulon may not have started out as Counter-Revolutionary, they found themselves pushed increasingly towards that designation by the end of August. Just as the Revolution pulled the Italian states out of their peripheral zone, the Toulonese found their local struggle for supremacy in danger of being subsumed by the swirling conflict between the Revolution, represented by Carteaux, and the Coalition, represented by Hood's blockade. Toulon had no hope of holding out against Carteaux's forces while Hood prevented any sort of resupply. There may have been some consideration given to trying to hold out against both, or even to giving in to the Convention, but the fall of Marseilles had two effects on Toulon. First is that the city became swollen with refugees, further impressing on them the need for supplies. Realistically they may have been able to hold out several weeks, even months, but there was little hope in the prospect of waiting now that Marseille had fallen and Lyon was under siege.[49] Second was the news from the Marseille refugees that starving was perhaps a better option than the fate that awaited them at the hands of the Convention.

This left the Toulonese only one realistic option—the British. As the Girondin deputy M. Isnard put it, "it was necessary either to surrender to the Montagnards or the British fleet, to yield to the tender mercies of

[48] Ibid.

[49] Paul Hanson, *The Jacobin Republic Under Fire* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).

Robespierre and Freron or to Admiral Hood."[50] In fact, Marseille had actually first opened negotiations with the British. On August 18, some of their leaders contacted Hood concerning the passage of grain and possibly peace with the Coalition. Negotiations were underway when Marseille was lost. The Marseillais then suggested an offer of protection for Toulon. This culminated in, on August 23, Hood's first offer of protection to Toulon on the condition that the Republic be renounced in favor of the monarchy and all military installations were entrusted to him. This was heavily debated in Toulon, but ultimately the arrival of the refugee Marseillais with stories of the "tender mercies" of the Convention tipped the balance in favor of the British. At 5:00 AM on the morning of August 25, Louis XVII was declared King and the civil administrators of Toulon left to inform Hood.[51]

Even though this aligned the city of Toulon with the Coalition, the French Mediterranean fleet was still an important factor standing in the way of the union. The navy had long been a bastion of Revolutionary sentiment, and the thought of so great a treason as turning over the fleet to the British was anathema to many.[52] Admiral Trogoff, who was in charge of the fleet, turned Royalist relatively quickly, but 16 of the 17 ships-of-the-line in Toulon's harbor were prepared to fight to prevent the British's entrance. Tense negotiations took place over the next two days and the government in Toulon only resolved the situation by informing the fleet that they would bombard them from the coastal fortifications if they did not surrender.

The decision also was influenced by the appearance of the Spanish fleet on August 27 under Admiral Langara, with 17 ships-of-the-line, with the Coalition forces now nearly doubling the French fleet. The Toulonese government, in conjunction with the Coalition, also promised the seamen full pay in specie (i.e., coins) rather than assignats (i.e., paper money during the French Revolution) and immediate permission to return home. This was especially tempting to sailors from the Atlantic coast, though perhaps not surprisingly when they returned home they were treated as traitors.[53]

[50] M. Isnard, *Isnard a Fréron*, an IV, 18.

[51] French *Archives Nationales* (hereafter AN) AF II/297.

[52] William Cormack, *Revolution and Political Conflict in the French Navy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Étienne Taillemite, *Histoire ignorée de la marine française* (Paris: Perrin, 2003).

[53] *Archives du Ministère de la Guerre* (hereafter AMG), BB 4/21 f. 173, 177, 179; Cormack, *Revolution and Political Conflict in the French Navy,* 189.

With the naval standoff decided, on August 29, 1793, Lord Hood took possession of Toulon in the name of Louis XVII. It is important to note that this was not premeditated on his part. Hood wrote a postscript to a letter of August 25 that he had just become aware "that [a] white flag was this day hoisted on all the forts and on part of the fleet, and that those ships that did not do so were fired at from the forts. I long to know the issue, which I shall do in the morning as three of the Comms. are gone on shore for the purpose."[54] He had been sent to the Mediterranean primarily to protect trade with only a slight consideration given to actually making gains on the French mainland; however, now he found himself responsible for holding the most important strategic city in the region.

A further key point is that Toulon did not surrender to Hood or the Coalition. Rather, Hood became the custodian of Toulon and the French fleet for Louis XVII. The interpretation and implementation of this custodianship was left ambiguous, and both the Toulonese and the British agreed that the exact form of the Bourbon Restoration could be decided in the future. Indeed, Hood and the British government expressly forbade any of the *émigré* armies or princes from coming to Toulon, putting into practice Pitt's commitment to ambiguity in their interactions with France. Allowing the émigré princes to return would have been committing to a complete Restoration and a loss of indemnification opportunities, while for the Toulonese the émigré princes still represented an affront to their municipal authority and an expression of the Counter-Revolution they continued to resist. The issue of what form the Restoration of Louis XVII would take was put off in favor of dealing with the practical military situation at hand as Carteaux's Army drew closer.

The revolt of Toulon and Hood's subsequent taking of both the town and the fleet was at first met with a mixed reaction in London. On the one hand, it was a tremendous boon for the English war effort. Parliament confirmed Hood's proclamation and congratulated him on his success. The Lord Commissioners wrote to him of their plans to send a sizable land force to Toulon and that "no exertion will be omitted to supply a force sufficient to repel attacks."[55] The next few months would show the lie in that statement, but the taking of Toulon proved fortuitous to public opinion concerning the war, as well as the British strategy. Just a few weeks prior to receiving the news concerning Toulon, the British forces

[54] BNA FO 95/4/6; ADM 1/391 Hood to Grenville, 25 August 1793.
[55] BNA 30/8/334, Pitt's draft of Toulon Commissioners' Instructions, fos. 20I-2.

had failed disastrously in their attempt to take Dunkirk from the French. This first real engagement of the war for the British was a perfect example of how their strategy was predicated on a model of indemnification, as the purpose of Dunkirk was to offer it to Austria in exchange for other considerations. The Dunkirk expedition was an unmitigated failure, and Toulon provided a needed victory for the government to trumpet.[56]

On the other hand, however, Hood taking Toulon in the name of Louis XVII was problematic for the Pitt ministry. In the same September 25 correspondence, where the Lord Commissioners congratulated Hood, they also reasserted the initial aims of the war and noted that his proclamation "seemed to convey that one of those objects in the outset of the War was the reestablishment of the French monarchy. The true ground of the War was to repeal an unjust and provoked aggression against H.M. and his Allies and the rest of Europe."[57] Although a Restoration of the Bourbon monarchy was certainly an option for Pitt, and the letter goes on to "highly approve" of Hood's conduct, Pitt, Dundas, and Grenville were not quite ready to declare for a Bourbon Restoration.

Although the military situation demanded attention, the assumption that Toulon was going to be held as the Coalition's operating base into the south of France necessitated a plan concerning the governance of Toulon and some resolution concerning the relationship between Britain and the Revolution. Pitt looked to Gilbert Elliot to develop this policy for the Mediterranean. As one of Burke's Whigs who now worked in conjunction with the Pitt administration, Pitt and Grenville at first named him to the post of civilian commissioner in Dunkirk in August of 1793. Burke initially had mixed feelings about Elliot's appointment as a Civil Commissioner because he opposed Dunkirk as a strategic object, but he was optimistic about Elliot's influence on the expedition.[58] Indeed, Elliot's instructions did have an ideological tone that Burke approved of:

> We must endeavor to be the Counterpart of the Convention of France, we must pay attention to the interests of the Clergy and the other legitimate

[56] M. Duffy, "'A particular service': The British government and the Dunkirk expedition of 1793," *The English Historical Review*, 91, no. 360 (July 1976), 529–554.

[57] BNA 30/8/334, Pitt's draft of Toulon Commissioners' Instructions, fos. 20I-2.

[58] *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, VII, ed. P. J. Marshall and J. Woods (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 344: Burke to Loughborough, 15 Sept. 1793; Paul Kelly, "Strategy and Counter-Revolution: The Journal of Sir Gilbert Elliot, 1–22 September 1793," *English Historical Review*, XCVIII (1983), 334.

> orders of Society. We must restore a Magistracy founded on the ancient System and consistent with the regular Exercise of Subordination and obedience to regular Laws.[59]

When the Duke of York retreated from the siege at Dunkirk, Elliot saw it as an opportunity for a change in the direction of the war aims of the government. In his correspondence, Elliot wrote of how he was convinced that Dundas saw Dunkirk as a mistake and that even before the lifting of the siege, Dundas was preparing "to send immediately a considerable body of troops, about 10,000, to La Vendee to cooperate with the Royalists, declaring explicitly for Louis 17th." Elliot went on to write, "The loss of Dunkirk will not be much to be regretted if it brings about a considerable change in the system of the war and especially if it leads to an explicit avowal of some principle in the war favourable to the true interests of France." The relationship with Toulon seemed to be just such a change.

When rumors of the fall of Toulon first arrived on the morning of September 12, Pitt refused to believe it, but by that night the news had been confirmed. Elliot wrote on September 13: "This great event seems to alter the whole face of affairs. … Here is also a full avowal of Louis the 17, and of just and honorable objects in the war."[60] Burke as well "truly and unreservedly rejoiced" at the news that Toulon had been taken, not in the name of King George III but rather in the name of Louis XVII.[61] On September 15, Elliot visited Burke with news that he might be appointed in Toulon, a prospect that excited both of them.[62]

Despite this initial enthusiasm, however, Elliot's future conversations with Pitt would temper his Counter-Revolutionary leanings. By September 20, when Elliot discussed his commission with Pitt and Dundas, he found some of his plans dashed: "I wished for as strong a declaration as possible against conquest in France. I found that this would not be allowed me. … Everything depends on keeping our allies to the confederacy. They will not act, or not adhere to the league, without some object of territorial acquisition."[63] In terms of the specific indemnification discussed at that meeting, Elliot noted that France would find itself reduced to pre-Louis

[59] Quoted in Kelly, "Strategy and Counter-Revolution," National Library of Scotland, MS 11159, 1 Sept. 1793, Minto.

[60] Ibid., 12 Sept.

[61] *Burke Correspondence*, vii, 430–435.

[62] Kelly, "Strategy and Counterrevolution," 15 Sept.

[63] Ibid., 20 Sept.

XIV borders, Austria would take all of the Netherlands, and Piedmont–Sardinia would get parts of Languedoc.

Britain, faithful to its driving interests since the American Revolution, would stay out of European affairs and instead take the West Indies, all of the East Indian possessions, and possibly Corsica and Malta. Elliot disagreed with this plan as it existed, stating, "I should be for securing Europe against the greater evil [the anarchy of the French Revolution], even at the expense of very just and expedient claims of another sort, and a different value."[64] Ultimately however, Elliot conceded the point to Pitt that the practical maintenance of alliances outweighed the ideological considerations of reinstating the Bourbon regime. Burke would come to be quite disappointed in Elliot, as he "fell under the sway of Pitt."[65]

From the perspective of London then, taking Toulon was entirely consistent with its overall war aims, though it happened a full year prior to when they anticipated and took 49,000 less men; however, taking Toulon in the name of Louis XVII caused difficulties. Elliot and Burke wanted this to mean that the war was ideological in nature and, practically, that Britain's purpose was to restore the Old Regime in France without any indemnification. In 1793, however, Pitt and Dundas were not convinced of the necessity of returning to the way it was in 1789. International stability was indeed the goal, but they were not sure that a full Restoration was the fulfilment of that goal. As it happened, the policymakers in London were more concerned with keeping the Coalition together, not sacrificing either stability or British progress. Holding Toulon for Louis XVII was not inherently contradictory to either purpose, but it was crucially important for Pitt and Dundas to communicate to their allies that this declaration for Louis XVII did not mean that indemnification was off the table. Also important, however, was the other side of convincing the Toulonese that their stance of custodianship was genuine and that they could be trusted with the fate of France.[66] The government tasked Elliot with achieving this balance in the Western Mediterranean.

This balancing act is further borne out in the official instructions sent with Elliot to Hood and General O'Hara. The three of them formed the

[64] Ibid.

[65] W. Copeland, ed., *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958–78), VIII, Burke to Elliot, 22 Sept. 1793, 434; Ibid., VIII, Burke to Windham, 6 Nov. 1793, 476.

[66] By October the custodial relationship was mostly forgotten by Pitt and Dundas, and Toulon was referred to as having "surrendered."

Commission in charge of governing Toulon, with Hood as the nominal head and in charge of fleet affairs, O'Hara in charge of the ground forces, and Elliot in charge of civilian administration. The instructions made note that Britain's intent was not to dismember France, but rather to achieve "reasonable indemnification" for it and its allies. Also, in terms of the relationship with a Restoration, the view from London was "that regular government in France can be assured only by the restoration of monarchy in the person of Louis XVII, but considers its benefits to depend on the adoption of just limitations, without, however, in any way upholding those prescribed in 1789, many of which will be seen as impracticable."[67] Thus, the instructions commanded Elliot to communicate that the British were operating in good faith with their agreement to hold the city for Louis XVII, but Pitt and Dundas avoided making any serious statement concerning the exact nature of the Restoration.

In the same instructions they stated: "All places which accept H.M's protection must be considered as for the time in H.M's possession and subject to his supreme authority."[68] Even though on the surface this might seem to go against the principle of custodianship, in reality Pitt and Dundas were assuring the Toulonese of their fidelity: "…the authority of any of the French princes, even in the character of Regent, cannot be admitted, unless by special arrangement. The Commissioners will, however, interfere as little as possible with the course of local affairs."[69] This position came from the British ambiguity in terms of the form of the Restoration and their refusal to commit to a complete return to the 1789 status quo; however, it was perfectly amenable to the Toulonese. Their "Federalism" was not motivated by Counter-Revolution or Royalism or any desire to see the émigré princes in power at Toulon; rather, it was motivated by local exigencies and a reaction specifically against the radicalization of the Jacobins.

While Pitt, Grenville, and Burke debated and discussed the nature of the British relationship with Toulon in London, and while Elliot was traveling to his post, the situation in the Mediterranean changed rapidly. The British occupation of Toulon fundamentally altered not only the conception of the mission of the Coalition in the Mediterranean but also the ability of the Coalition, especially the British, to assert themselves against

[67] BNA FO 20/1, 18 Oct.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

the French within that context. Through the first half of 1793 the French had few friends in the Mediterranean, though with their fleet unopposed in Toulon and their Army in Nice, a need for friends was secondary. The entrance of the British fleet began to challenge France's domination in the Mediterranean; with the British forming alliances (e.g., Savoy and Naples), there were more and more desperate pleas from the Corsicans for succor and increased pressure from Drake and Hervey in Genoa and Tuscany. The taking of Toulon created a domino effect across the spectrum of the Western Mediterranean. Although Toulon may have necessitated a careful approach because of the custodial nature of the British presence there, the rest of the Mediterranean was ripe for change. The French had made attempts to colonize the Western Mediterranean for the Revolution but only succeeded in opening the region for the Coalition. Now, from their position in Toulon, Hood and the British diplomats throughout the Mediterranean began to push back.

The first aggressive set of orders given by Hood was one that would have significant ramifications for the British in 1794. Throughout June, July, and August, he had heard consistent reports of the Corsicans eagerness for British assistance and protection in their quest to become independent. Phillip Masseira, a Corsican who had served in a company of Corsicans under the British at Gibraltar, as well as spent time in the employ of the British intelligence service, was the chief instigator of this. Mulgrave had evidently attempted to find him to discuss the situation but had been unable to ascertain his whereabouts. On September 8, however, Hood sent Commodore Linzee to Corsica, where he was to blockade the French garrisons in Bastia, Saint Florenzo, and Calvi and offer them the opportunity to declare for Louis XVII.[70]

Linzee's expedition met with limited success. One of his first reports noted how though the British guns made breaches in the walls at Fornili, and the Corsicans on land outnumbered the French 1500 to 240, the Corsicans never moved to attack.[71] After frequent further failed attacks, Linzee wrote to Hood his opinion that Paoli was "a composition of art and deceit and not to be depended upon."[72] In Linzee's estimation, Paoli had severely misled the British regarding the strength of the French garrisons and the willingness or ability of the Corsicans to fight. He was of

[70] BNA FO 20/2, Hood to Linzee, 8 Sept.
[71] Ibid., Linzee to Hood, 7 Oct.
[72] Ibid., 24 Oct.

the opinion that the Corsicans wished the British to waste themselves on evicting the French without any clear expectations for reparations afterward. This is not an unfair assessment of Paoli's ambitions at the time, although he was sincere about his need for British assistance and his willingness to cooperate with Hood's need for a port.[73] This interaction would serve to sow a seed of discord between Hood and Paoli that would later cause issue. At the time, however, Corsica was not especially important to the larger Mediterranean picture, though Hood referenced it as early as October as a possible fallback point should Toulon fall.[74]

After Linzee's failure to make headway against the French in Corsica, Hood sent him to Tunis. Here he was to make amends for the previous debacle, when Lumisdaine did not deliver Hood's letter to the British consul, and to prevent a French convoy from providing supplies to Carteaux.[75] Linzee ultimately failed to prevent the French convoy from sailing and resupplying the Republican forces, and he also failed to convince the Bey of the immorality of the French cause, or the superiority of the British. Interestingly, when Hood gave instructions to Linzee, he explicitly stated that he should not to offend the Bey by any untoward display of force. The growing list of naval commitments stretched the British forces thin, and persuasion was superior to coercion in this diplomatic campaign for the Mediterranean. In an attempt to win the Bey over with words, while Hood proclaimed in Toulon for Louis XVII, to the Bey of Tunis, Hammuda ibn Ali, he explicitly stated that Britain "has no opinion on the government of France and was fine supporting the Revolution, as long as it bring[s] permanent peace." None of these attempts succeeded at moving the Bey from his pro-French position.[76]

Linzee's travels demonstrate the difficult position the British were in by the autumn of 1793. Although they were strategically in position to be aggressive from Toulon, the disconnect between the Mediterranean and London, between the various members of the Coalition, and between the overarching war aims of the Coalition was beginning to affect the consistency of Hood's mission. In the cases of Corsica and Tunis, the French were too firmly entrenched either militarily or politically to be pushed

[73] ADHC 3L1/41.

[74] J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon*, Appendix E, Draft from Lords Commissioners to Hood, Whitehall, 1 Oct.

[75] BNA ADM 1/3841, Udney to Hood, 22 July 1793.

[76] BNA FO 77/3, Hood to Magra, 19 Nov. 1793.

out easily, and the British struggled to develop working relationships with the minor powers that offered any substantive difference between themselves and the French. The case of Genoa would prove no different, as the *Modeste* incident returned to the fore of policy discussions. On September 26, Hood resolved to send Rear Admiral Gell with ten ships to "immediately seize the French frigate 'Modeste' and every other French ship in the port."[77] This was a continuation of Hood's previous attempts to force the neutral ports to choose a side; however, now entrenched in Toulon instead of blockading it, Hood used less subtlety and pretext and more gunboat diplomacy.

The specifics of what happened at the port in Genoa with Gell are somewhat unclear. The British's reports were reasonably clear-cut in describing the seizure of the *Modeste*.[78] The French story varies somewhat, however, saying that the British came up alongside the *Modeste* in port without flags and under the guise of neutrality, but once they came close enough, they boarded the ship by surprise.[79] For the French then, the British were clearly in violation of Genoese neutrality, though from the British perspective they were simply reacting to a previous violation of neutrality that Genoa had failed to enforce. Regardless of the specifics, however, the result was the same. Francis Drake and Gell pushed the Genoese to choose sides and either expel all French republicans or be blockaded.[80] Faced with the threat of a British blockade or a French invasion, the Genoese were stuck between the proverbial rock and hard place.

Ultimately, French minister Tilly did not ask the Genoese to abandon neutrality, only to continue supporting the flow of grain from Tuscany and Genoa to France.[81] Also, although the British holding Toulon was impressive, there was no direct indication that the Coalition was going to be able to deal with the Army of Italy, much less the Army of Carteaux that was besieging Toulon. Therefore, the Genoese chose to side with the French and expel all foreigners other than the Republicans. The British fleet, including Horatio Nelson, promptly blockaded the port. Nelson would conduct himself admirably during the blockade, though he would remark on his frustration at being unable to affect the shore-hugging,

[77] BNA ADM 2/1346; ADM 2/124.
[78] BNA ADM 7/354.
[79] *Ministre Affaire Etrangers* (hereafter MAE) Gênes, Tilly to Spinoza, 2 Oct.
[80] BNA FO 28/6, Drake to Grenville, 11 Oct.
[81] MAE Gênes, Tilly to Spinoza, 18 Oct.

shallow-keeled vessels the Genoese used to ship grain along the coast to the Army of Italy and beyond.[82] This eventually made the blockade a severe drain on resources with little actual impact. Drake, meanwhile, would later complain that if they had attempted a more diplomatic solution, the result might have been different.

After establishing the blockade in Genoa, Hood commanded Gell's squadron to continue down to Livorno to address a crisis that had arisen around Hervey, courtesy of the British in Toulon. On September 5, two men by the name of Barcon and Roux purchased grain in Livorno. La Flotte caught wind of this and, presuming that they were agents without a nation buying grain for Counter-Revolutionaries in France, pressured the Tuscan authorities to arrest the men and quarantine the grain, as per Tuscan policy.[83] The Tuscan officials complied, but these men were not agents without a nation. In fact, Hood had sent them to restock the sorely pressed stores of Toulon. This raised the question: Exactly which nation should these men be considered under? Udney, the Consul at Livorno, wrote to Hervey that the men should be considered agents of the "Municipality of Toulon, newly independent, and were not answerable to the Consul of the French Republic, nor were they violating the laws of a free port."

When Hervey brought the situation to Serristori, the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Tuscany (Manfredini being in Vienna to answer the charges brought by the capture of Semonville), Serristori replied that the matter was in the hands of the Tribunal and Livorno and that the Courts would make the decision. [84] Hervey suspected that Manfredini may have influenced the process from afar, so subsequently wrote another letter to Serristori in which he exhibited the same heavy-handed pressuring that he had applied previously. He noted that Lord Hood had specifically requested the grain and that to delay it further would be seriously detrimental to the Coalition, with dire consequences for Tuscany.[85]

The succeeding weeks saw continual back and forth where Hervey attempted to pressure Serristori, Manfredini, and the Grand Duke to release the grain, or to allow other grain to be sent because the need was

[82] See BNA FO 28/6 for correspondence between Nelson and Hood concerning the frustrations of the blockade.

[83] MAE Corresp. Politi., 145bis, Toscane, La Flotte to Deforgues, 5 Sept. 1793.

[84] BNA FO528/5 Udney to Hervey, 6 Sept. 1793.

[85] BNA FO 528/13, Hervey to Serristori, 9–10 Sept.

urgent.[86] In fact, the need was not especially urgent as grain had been successfully purchased in Rome, but by the middle of September the issue had become one of principle and less of provision. Hervey was convinced that this was yet another example of Tuscan partiality. He argued that La Flotte had regularly received similar dispensations for grain exports, though the courts had not sequestered the grain in the case of La Flotte's requests. There is little evidence to suggest that this was partiality against the British, but rather simply a necessary legal step in the confusion that arose out of Toulon's new status. Tuscany was attempting to adhere scrupulously to the letter of neutral law, and there were few previous examples of a situation such as Toulon.

Nevertheless, this attempt by Tuscany to remain on the margins and practice passive neutrality was in trouble from the moment the British took Toulon. Hervey noted in his report to Hood on September 9 that "England … knows of no neutrality which can subsist relative to a government of rebels. This being the case, the port of Leghorn is no longer a neutral port."[87] Although this was not an accurate statement of British policy towards neutrals stemming from Grenville, it was in line with Hood's own inclination.[88] After La Flotte delayed the court proceedings by dismissing his lawyers and hiring new ones, and the grain remained sequestered, Hood opted to use the force at his disposal to push against the neutrality of Tuscany. He ordered Gell to Livorno to seize the French frigate *Imperieuse* and all other French vessels. Hood wrote to Hervey:

> Your Excellency will be pleased to make known to the Grand Duke that if Mr. de La Flotte is not ordered to [quit] the Tuscan territories within twelve hours, the port of Leghorn shall be blockaded and no ship or vessel suffered to go in or out; and as the government of Tuscany has in numberless instances departed from a fair and honorable Neutrality in favor of the French Convention, Your Excellency will be pleased to submit to the Grand Duke the necessity of His Royal Highness's making an instant candid and explicit declaration, whether his Royal Highness wishes to be looked upon as friendly or hostile to Great Britain, as an open and avowed enemy is infinitely more sufferable than a false friend.[89]

[86] BNA FO 528/14 contains the series of letters between Hervey and Serristori.
[87] BNA FO 528/14, Hervey to Hood, 9 Sept. 1793.
[88] BNA FO 528/1 Grenville to Hervey, 4 Oct. 1793.
[89] BNA FO 79/8, Hood to Hervey. 24 Sept 1793.

Such a demand would have scarcely been conceivable prior to the British taking of Toulon; however, now that Hood was in a position of relative strength, he effectively countermanded Grenville's previous statements urging caution and moderation to Hervey. Hervey, let off his leash, reacted predictably. He proceeded to storm in to the Grand Dukes' bedchamber, where he accosted the half-dressed Tuscan leader with the situation, including the maxim: "Prudence always indicates to the weak to submit to the strong."[90] He then penned a memorial with the demands written out and submitted this to the Tuscan Court. In it, he implied that Hood would act offensively against Livorno and not simply impose a blockade, and he demanded that Tuscany completely break communications with Paris, neither of which had been suggested by Hood.[91]

The reply came that evening. Serristori wrote that Tuscany would comply with the demands and order La Flotte to depart.[92] There was some debate as to the terms of the departure, as Hervey demanded that the French leave within 48 hours, and that they be given a passport but nothing else. Serristori replied that this was unacceptable. Hervey, in response, saw "no reason why 48 hours were not sufficient for a parcel of *sans-culottes* to decamp." Eventually safe passage was arranged, but Hervey made plans for the French diplomat's papers to be confiscated once they were at sea, in blatant disregard for the promise of safe passage.[93] For Tuscany's part, Serristori wrote to La Flotte that the Grand Duke was asking them to leave for the sake of "public tranquility," but that he had no desire to insult the French Nation in word or deed.[94]

On September 18, Captain Young arrived in Florence to announce the long-awaited arrival of the British squadron. Actual negotiations to end Tuscan neutrality had been slow because of the news that Genoa was resisting the British, and the refusal of Hervey to offer any substantive promises of protection or alliance. Hervey referenced how Naples had expelled French minister Mackau and urged Tuscany to do the same; however, although Hamilton and General Acton had been able to reach an agreement concerning an alliance between Naples and Great Britain,

[90] BNA FO 79/9, Hervey to Grenville, 28 Oct. 1793.

[91] BNA FO 79/9, Hervey to Serristori, n.d.

[92] BNA FO 79/9, Serristori to Hervey, 8 Oct. 1793; MAE Corr. Political. 145bis, Toscane, Serristori to La Flotte, 8 Oct. 1793.

[93] BNA FO 79/9, Hervey to Grenville, 28 Oct. 1793.

[94] Antonio Zobi, *Storia civile della Toscana* (Firenze: Nabu Press, 1850) III, "*Appendice di documenti al tomo terzo*" VIII, Serrstori to La Flotte, 9 Oct. 1793, 15–16.

Hervey inexplicably rejected the possibility of an alliance. Serristori, after Hervey accosted him on his way to a Council of State meeting, asked: "What is Tuscany to do without protection? And without forces? Your ships are here today and gone tomorrow. We must have something for the neutrality we give up, some return for the sacrifice we make." Besides, indeed, Grenville had authorized Hervey to offer Tuscany full protection.

Hervey was, however, of the opinion that he could obtain the ends of the British without offering protection and proceeded to negotiate on those principles. Although the forces of conflict over the Revolution pulled Tuscany into their orbit, to Hervey, Tuscany was still simply a diplomatic pawn in the campaign against the Revolution. On September 23, he took the path of the stick over the carrot and ordered Captain Young and the squadron to proceed with the blockade of the port.[95]

Finally, on October 28, the Grand Duke agreed to renounce neutrality, to revoke all ties with Revolutionary France, and to open up the port and all trade to the Coalition. In return, Hervey promised only that British ships would protect and convoy of Tuscan vessels that happened to be traveling in the same direction.[96] Courtesy of the British position of strength at Toulon, and through coercion and manipulation at cannon point, Hervey successfully had ended 60 years of Tuscan neutrality. Hood's initial reluctance to resort to military coercion proved wise, however, as the British were unable to maintain pressure or protection in Tuscany. This led to quick dissatisfaction with the alliance, and by February of 1794, agents of Tuscany were in touch with those of France to restore neutral relations.

Although Toulon in the hands of the British caused tumult from London to Naples, the shift in the balance of power was dependent on Toulon remaining in the hands of the Coalition. This in turn was dependent on the functioning of the Coalition within the rapidly changing Mediterranean international political climate. Even though Pitt initially promised Hood that providing a force to maintain Toulon was a high priority, the reality of the situation was that the British were not realistically able to hold the city without assistance from the Toulonese, the Spanish, the Austrians, the Sardinians, and the Neapolitans. Pitt's attempts to bolster the number of men available to the British military and navy were

[95] BNA FO 79/9, Hervey to Grenville, 28 Oct. 1793.

[96] BNA FO 79/9. All of the details surrounding the events leading up to the renunciation of neutrality, as well as the preliminary treaties and final agreements, can be found in the packet Hervey sent to Grenville on 28 October 1793.

designed with the intent of having campaigns in 1794, not in the autumn and winter of 1793.

Earlier in 1793, the allies with Mediterranean interests were quick enough to take up a common cause with the British when Hood entered into the Mediterranean, but this was largely with the (correct) assumption that Hood was mostly interested in protecting trade. They made their promises of troops and ships with the best intentions; however, when the British occupied Toulon, the alliance with England suddenly took on a very different character. Instead of Britain doing whatever possible to assist Naples and Sardinia, with the respective governments contributing to their own defense, suddenly they were being called on to contribute to the defense of Toulon.

In other words, instead of persisting on the edge of European affairs and protecting the balance of power against the threat of Jacobins, the British and their allies were entering into uncharted territory. This change in direction was an especially difficult turn for the Mediterranean powers to navigate, but their assistance was essential to holding Toulon. Thus, while on the one hand Hood used Toulon as a launching point from which to assert British dominance in the Western Mediterranean, to hold that position he almost entirely had to rely on the other members of the Coalition who began to see the British as a threat in their own right.

One of the first pressing issues confronting the Coalition in Toulon was that of the remaining Toulonese. Even though the citadel and forts surrounding the city and harbor were under Hood's control, part of the agreement with the Toulonese was that the garrisons would consist equally of French and British soldiers, with the British taking command. This was problematic in part because of the lack of English troops, but also because of the suspect competency and loyalty of many of the French forces. As Hood put it: "… I am under no apprehension of their [the Republican forces] being able to make any impression upon us. I am more afraid of an enemy within than without, and am therefore anxious to send off about 5000 turbulent disaffected seamen."[97]

The Spanish troops were a disappointment as well. Lord Mulgrave, who arrived in mid-September from Turin to take command of the ground forces in Toulon, described them as "good for nothing, officers and men," while in late October Elliot referred to them as "worse than useless." Horatio Nelson expressed his opinion that "the Spaniards behave

[97] BNA ADM 2/125, Hood to Admiralty, n.d.

so infamously that I sincerely wish not one ship or soldier was in Toulon." Similarly, though a sizable contingent of Neapolitans arrived on October 8, Mulgrave noted: "The Neapolitans are the finest looking troops I ever saw; not one of their officers or soldiers having ever seen a shot fired." Indeed, they twice vacated their positions at the first sign of pressure from the French forces of Carteaux. The Piedmontese, of whom 50,000 men had been requested, were the only "emulatory" troops on the ground at Toulon; however, Mulgrave correctly feared their inability to supply anything resembling their full numbers—only around 4000 were ever present in Toulon. Overall, Mulgrave wrote to Dundas on October 24 that "[Hood] urges a reinforcement of good steady troops, for the Spanish and Italian troops tend more to the reduction of the town by famine than to defence of it by arms."[98]

Another difficult aspect of the Toulon occupation was a dispute over leadership of the troops with the Spaniards. The Spanish brought an equal number of ships to the British, and in early September provided approximately three times as many troops in the city. In acknowledgment of this fact, Hood named Rear-Admiral Gravina "Commandant of the Troops" in Toulon.[99] This was evidently mostly an informal position as far as Hood was concerned, especially considering that when the Neapolitans and Piedmontese arrived in early October, they arrived with explicit directions from their respective courts that they were under command of the British, not the Spanish.[100] After news of this situation, Gravina initially gave up his post as Commandant to troops other than those provided by Spain. But in mid-October, Admiral Langara wrote to Hood informing him that he was pleased to promote Gravina "to the rank of Lieutenant General of this fleet, and to confirm him in the general command of the allied forces in the possession of which he has been, by the agreement between your Excellency and me."[101] Hood responded politely, but firmly: "I am very much at a loss to conceive upon what ground Admiral Gravina can take upon him the title of commander in chief of the combined forces at Toulon; more especially as the town and its depended forts were yielded up to the British troops alone, and taken possession of by me."[102]

[98] For the accounting of these troops, see J. Holland Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon,* 166. The individual letters can be found in BNA ADM 1/391.

[99] BNA ADM 1/391, Hood to Langara, 2 September, 1793.

[100] Ibid., King Ferdinand to Hood, 15 September.

[101] Ibid., Langara to Hood, 24 October 1793.

[102] Ibid., 25 Oct.

The two admirals proceeded to exchange letters dithering over whether Langara and Hood had been presented the keys to the town, or if, as Hood claimed, Langara came in after the fact and only received keys to the archives, because the actual key-exchanging ceremony was done four days prior with only the British present.[103] Hood concluded the exchange with a biting analysis of the dynamic between the British and the Spanish:

> Had your excellency thought yourself at liberty to have complied with the first request I had the honour to make for your assistance, we should then have been joint in taking possession of Toulon. … I was left to do the best I could by myself, and consequently took possession of Toulon, the arsenal, and forts without that aid I so strongly pressed for, and coveted from your Excellency.[104]

They subsequently escalated the matter to their respective ministers in London and Madrid, with the Marquis de Campo issuing a complaint against Hood.[105] Grenville replied, via a letter to St. Helens in Madrid, that Hood retained his full support and that he took all actions exactly as they should have been.[106]

Another incident between the Spanish and the British that is exemplary of the Mediterranean political dynamic in 1793 came courtesy of the Corsicans. Hood had written to Paoli, after the failure of Linzee to dislodge the French, that he was unable to provide more assistance until the spring. This led Paoli to make his own plans accordingly, and in late November several Corsican vessels, flying the Corsican flag, entered into the port of Toulon in search of supplies. Langara wrote to Hood asking him to tell the Corsicans to have either a white flag, or a recognizable flag of some other nation.[107] Hood replied that he had "always understood that a very great part of the inhabitants of Corsica refused to acknowledge themselves subjects of France; so does not see upon what ground he can prevent vessels from a part of the island (not belonging to or in possession of the French) from wearing the Corsican flag, especially as this port is at present *virtually* English."[108]

[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid.

[105] In Cottin, *Toulon and Les Anglais: Pieces Justicatif*, 436. For the originals, see BNA FO 72/28.

[106] Ibid., 437.

[107] BNA ADM 1/391, Langara to Hood, 20 November, 1793.

[108] Ibid., Hood to Langara, 21 November.

From a position of strength in Toulon, Hood was willing to disregard the purpose of the Coalition as a stabilizing force in international politics in favor of expanding British interests. Spain had expressed interest in Corsica as indemnification from France, but this tacit acceptance of Corsica's independent status put Britain not only at the crux of the Coalition but also as the arbiter of international politics in the Mediterranean. Far from protecting and stabilizing the international system, this was indicative of the destabilizing influence wrought by Britain's occupation of Toulon.

This more aggressive stance by Hood presumed that the British would be able to maintain their position in Toulon without meaningful assistance from their allies. Ultimately, this confidence was misplaced. The spirit among the various allied troops at Toulon was growing shakier with the multitude of divisions though the Republican forces were getting constant reinforcements following the fall of Lyon.[109] Grenville had promised to send 5000 Hessians mercenaries, but he rerouted these to the Rhineland after Austria promised to send 5000 troops from Milan because they were closer.[110] They, however, intended to embark on British ships at Genoa; the breaking of diplomatic relations and blockading of Genoa put an end to this plan. From there the 5000 Austrians headed to Vado, so Hood sent Crosby to pick them up there. However, after hearing of the rift with Genoa, the Austrians ordered the troops back to Lombardy in order to strengthen their defenses should the situation prove even more volatile.[111]

The only remaining troops to reinforce Toulon that London had arranged for were from Gibraltar. Grenville ordered Robert Boyd, the Governor-General at Gibraltar, to have all the troops he could spare go to Toulon.[112] The rationale was that with the friendly relations with Spain, there would be less of a need for troops at Gibraltar. The exact circumstances of the situation are difficult to ascertain, but either Boyd did not trust the Spanish, or he read in a newspaper that Toulon did not need any troops; therefore, he initially neglected to send any troops. On October 27, he did send 750 troops but no gunners, which were what Hood desperately needed.[113]

[109] See Rose, *Lord Hood and the Defence of Toulon*, Chap. VI; Crook, 148.
[110] BNA FO 7/34, Eden to Grenville, 25 Sept.
[111] BNA ADM 1/391, Hood to Stephens, 23 Nov.
[112] BNA CO 91/36, Grenville to Boyd, n.d.
[113] BNA CO 91/36, Boyd to Hood, 27 October.

To make matters worse, at the same time as Hood was disappointed in the number of troops coming from Gibraltar, he was ordered to send Gell, along with a squadron of ships and 300 men from Toulon, to Gibraltar to be sent on the ill-fated West Indies expedition.[114] Everyone in Toulon was in disbelief at this news; nonetheless Hood relayed the orders to Gell. Even though they delayed in hopes for a countermanding order, none was given, so Gell made his way to Gibraltar.[115] There he would find the order to return to Toulon, as London had finally received the messages coming from Mulgrave, Hood, and O'Hara that the situation at Toulon was becoming untenable.[116] By the time Gell returned, however, the damage had been done and Toulon had fallen.

There are numerous other accounts of the fall of Toulon, in no small part because of the part played by Napoleon who came to the Republican Army following his expulsion and failures in Corsica.[117] It is likely, however, that even without the genius of Napoleon the British and the Spanish would not have been able to withstand the French Revolutionaries for long. They were losing key positions with regularity and found themselves so severely outmanned that it is remarkable that they lasted as long as they did. The British did not even possess enough seamen to sail the French fleet out of the harbor, and their attempts to destroy it on the way out was not a complete success.[118] They did manage to cripple French naval power in the Mediterranean for years to come, but after being gifted the entirety of French Mediterranean naval power and influence, the British left in only a marginally better position than they were in during July of 1793.

There were two key effects from the brief British occupation of Toulon. First is the creation of a stalemate in the struggle for the Western Mediterranean. Although the British failed to entirely destroy the French Mediterranean fleet, and they lost all military presence in the south of France, they retained significant naval superiority. This then left the British, French, and small states in an interesting position. There was no longer any serious military contest for the Mediterranean. The French had little ability to combat the British at sea and the British had little ability to combat the French on land. As a result of this, the campaign in the Western

[114] BNA ADM 2/1097.

[115] BNA ADM 1/391, Hood to Stephens, 27 October 1793.

[116] BNA ADM 1/391, Admiralty to Hood, 20 December 1793.

[117] See J. P. McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, for the narrative of Napoleon making his way to Toulon from Corsica.

[118] BNA ADM 1/391, Hood to Dundas, 20 December.

Mediterranean became almost entirely a diplomatic and political struggle. The loyalty or neutrality of the other Mediterranean powers was the primary arena of conflict. It was in this new battlefield that the British and the French adapted their initial strategies for international politics over the next three years, dragging the various Mediterranean powers with them.

Second, and as a practical example of this broader point, while Napoleon went from Corsica to Toulon, the English had found themselves going from Toulon to Corsica. As early as October, Corsica was suggested as a fallback plan should Toulon fall, and in January of 1794 Hood and Elliot made their way to the island.[119] Over the course of the spring, Hood and Major General Stewart—O'Hara's replacement after he was captured and injured in the fall of Toulon—went about clearing the island of French. Meanwhile, Elliot engaged in negotiations with Paoli regarding the nature of the British presence in Corsica. There was no talk in these negotiations of holding Corsica for Louis XVII, or of a Counter-Revolution, or even of Revolution. Rather, in 1794 the British took their lessons from Toulon and set about creating an entirely new and distinct concept of the state for the Mediterranean in the form of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom. Corsica would not be held for the French or for the Coalition but for the Corsicans and for the British, creating a new model of statecraft. Ultimately, the strategies they developed would be short-lived; however, from Toulon, neither the British nor French could see Waterloo. For the time being, they both took advantage of the unsettled nature of international relations in the Western Mediterranean.

[119] See BNA FO 20/3 for details the movement of the British from Toulon to Corsica. Also see Desmond Gregory, *The Ungovernable Rock*, Chap. 2.

CHAPTER 5

The Anglo-Corsican Kingdom, 1794–1796

In June of 1794, six months removed from their positions as custodians of Toulon, the British ratified the Constitution for the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom. This new joint state marked an attempt by the British to go beyond simply defending the traditional international order and instead offering an alternative to the French Revolution. In 1793, they had been content to prioritize commercial gains across a global spectrum, holding out territorial indemnification as a reward for the other members of the Coalition in an effort simultaneously to increase the power of Britain and to maintain the established international order that formed the basis of that power. After the debacle at Toulon, however, they were no longer content protecting the Mediterranean so that the other powers, especially Austria, Spain, and a restored Bourbon monarchy, could later partition the gains. The Anglo-Corsican Kingdom signified Britain staking a political claim to the Western Mediterranean as a sphere of influence, separate from the First Coalition but still opposed to France. From their position on the island, they urged unity against the French Revolution, while exhibiting a conspicuous disdain for the Old Regime international order they were ostensibly protecting.

On the surface the union between Britain, fraught with intransigent allies in the First Coalition, and Corsica, in dire need of protection against Revolutionary France, seemed ideal. This act of state formation, however, did not take place in a vacuum but instead placed the British in conflict

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with many of the Western Mediterranean states. The mantra of "security for the future" raised the question among the other states in the region of exactly whose future the British were securing. A vital component of the British mission in the Mediterranean was convincing the other powers that the French Revolution represented a greater threat than British expansion into the Mediterranean, but the very act of expanding subverted that claim. Rather than protecting the international order from the unstable French Revolutionary foreign policy, the British now became a force for instability themselves.

This additional tension on the already fraught struggle for the Western Mediterranean reverberated across the region as each power there reacted to the increased British presence differently. Corsica proved a common touchstone, but Genoa, Tuscany, Rome, Spain, and the Barbary Coast states each forced the British to defend their status within the Western Mediterranean, and to adapt to the local and regional concerns at play. The ideology of Counter-Revolution mixed with the historical and political pressures to create internal and external conflict ultimately provided the context for the crumbling of the First Coalition in the Western Mediterranean and the resurgence of the French in 1796.

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Following the evacuation of Toulon, the British Navy desperately needed a base of operations. The tension internal to the Coalition at Toulon led to strained relations with Spain, leaving little chance of a turn to the West for aid, and Gibraltar was too distant to adequately project power in the Ligurian and Tyrhennian Seas. Genoa was out of the question, as the Genoese met the news of the British failure in Toulon with "an indecent demonstration of joy."[1] Livorno offered supplies and shelter, but Hood was well aware that Tuscany and Britain were only barely cordial, and Tuscany was eager to forbid British warships from entering the port. Naples was too far down the Italian Peninsula to maintain a blockade of Toulon and protect British interests in the Western Mediterranean. In any case, Neapolitans were not willing to offer any sort of stable base.[2]

In addition to considering the need for a strong strategic base in the Mediterranean, the British were reconsidering the broader political impact

[1] British National Archives (hereafter BNA) FO 28/7 Drake to Grenville, 10 January 1795.

[2] *Private papers of George, second Earl Spencer, First Lord of the Admiralty 1794–1801*, vol. 1 (Navy Records Society, 1913–1924).

of their presence. They did not forget the difficulties that had arisen as a result of taking Toulon in the name of Louis XVII. The turn to wholeheartedly pursuing the Restoration of the Bourbon monarchy perhaps had begun in Toulon, but in the years immediately following that debacle and the demise of the Federalist movement, the British remained ambiguous in their commitment to the *émigré* cause.[3] This unsurprisingly resulted in a strained relationship with the émigrés, but in 1794 a full Restoration would have been a step backward for British interests in the Mediterranean and globe. Therefore, the British were noncommittal while they expanded their own influence in the Mediterranean at the expense of the French.

This ambiguity only added to the myriad of pressures the agents of the British faced in the Mediterranean. Returning to the concept of indemnification for the past and security for the future, the British keenly felt the tension between pursuing a war with France in conjunction with their allies while also balancing the wants and desires of these allies and simultaneously pursuing their own agenda of expansion into the Mediterranean as a commercial and political power. Throughout the course of 1794–1796, this balancing act would become more and more precarious as the distance between the aims of the British and the aims of the Coalition increased. Though they were committed to fighting the French Revolution, the form of that fight was continually up for negotiation. In 1794, limping from Toulon but determined to maintain the pressure on France, taking the island of Corsica seemed to be an excellent opportunity to continue their presence in the Mediterranean while weakening France and without committing to a certain course of action that ran the risk of alienating one or more of their allies. Corsica also provided their diplomats a base of operations to affect political change in the Western Mediterranean, maintaining and improving the Coalition against France. Corsica was ideally situated for this function, especially its Bay of San Fiorenzo, which was protected on either side by Calvi and Bastia. From San Fiorenzo, the British Navy would have access to nearly the entirety of the Italian Peninsula in the Western Mediterranean, as well as a position to blockade Toulon. Perhaps best of all, the Corsicans were inviting only the British, and not in the name of Louis XVII.

First, however, the British had to rid Corsica of the French. Cristoforo Saliceti had made his way back to Paris and then down to Nice as a

[3] Jennifer Mori, "The British Government and the Bourbon Restoration: The Occupation of Toulon, 1793," *The Historical Journal* 40, no. 3 (Sep 1997): 699–719.

representative-on-mission, but Lacombe St. Michel remained on the island, garrisoned in Bastia with a sizable force.[4] The French also held Calvi and St. Florent. In the first months of 1794, Hood turned his full attention to the island, with freedom of movement afforded by the nearly complete destruction of the French fleet in the evacuation of Toulon. However, just as in Toulon, the British Navy was undermanned and the failure at Toulon left their allies reluctant to contribute numbers, and Hood reluctant to accept any assistance.[5] This question of manpower would be a continual strain on the relationship between Britain and Corsica. Pasquale Paoli exacerbated this issue by severely underestimating the number of French on the island when advising the British. He placed the upper end of the estimate around 1500, while in reality there were closer to 8000 French in St. Florent, Calvi, Bastia, and the surrounding forts. He also severely overestimated the assistance that his Corsicans could reasonably provide. Initially, Paoli posited that he could raise up to 30,000 troops. When the time for action came closer, he lowered that to 13,000. The actual number was closer to 2000 troops, and those would need to be equipped and paid for by the British.[6]

An initial attack to secure San Fiorenzo was reasonably successful early in the campaign, but the lynchpin to Corsica was the city of Bastia, and that siege proved a tense and protracted affair. This was in no small part because of a lack of cooperation within the British military, especially between the Army and Navy, and a lack of coordination with the Corsican troops. Although Hood and Nelson desperately wanted to break the siege quickly, they were unable to convince the Army to attack. Then to the credit of those in charge of the Army, General David Dundas and then his replacement General d'Aubant, any attack would likely have been repelled, as there were far more French troops in the city than Paoli led them to believe. When Hood sent in a flag of truce demanding surrender. The answer he received from Lacombe St. Michel was defiant: "I have

[4] See *Procès-verbaux du Comité d'instruction Publique de la Convention Nationale*, Tome II, compiled by M. J. Guilluame, 1804, especially letters from Lacombe St. Michele on 6 Oct. 1793, 26 Oct. 1793, and 20 Nov. 1793. Also see French *Archives nationales* (hereafter AN) AF II/185 and AF II/253.

[5] Although there was discussion concerning the importance and utility of the Mediterranean in London, the ultimate decision was still to rely on the allies to supplement the forces of the British rather than sending more ships or troops. BNA ADM 1/392, no. 14.

[6] British Library Additional Manuscripts (hereafter BL Add. Mss.) 22688, Hood to Paoli, 17 February 1794; BNA HO 50/456, D. Dundas to H. Dundas, 21 February 1794.

shot for your ships and bayonets for your troops. When two-thirds of our troops are killed, I will then trust to the generosity of the English."[7]

It took until May 19 for the Siege of Bastia to come to a conclusion. This is an excellent example of the stalemate that occurred in the Mediterranean. Though not entirely destroyed, the French Navy was unable to challenge the British Navy in order to provide any sort of succor to the island. Not only was there the simple matter of numbers, but the year of 1794 was a particularly chaotic time within France. Therefore, despite continued protestations from Lacombe St. Michel, relatively little value was placed on Corsica.[8] Reclaiming the troublesome island held little appeal. Despite this lack of interest or support from France, the British still struggled to expel the remaining troops from the island.

The British were virtually unchallenged at sea, and in 1794 had alliances with the Spanish, Tuscans, and Neapolitans on the Mediterranean, not to mention Prussia and Austria on the Continent. The blame for their lack of quick progress perhaps can be laid chiefly on the lack of support from London, as well as the lack of support from their allies. (Although it is important to note that they did not request aid from their allies as this was always intended to be a purely British venture.) Regardless of blame, however, the fact remained that if Corsica proved problematic for the British militarily, how much more so would the Italian Peninsula, where the French were keenly interested? This marked the turn to diplomacy as the primary weapon to combat the French Revolution in the Western Mediterranean, making use of their dominance at sea to support their diplomatic mission rather than the other way around.

Corsica now would be the centerpiece of that mission, serving not only as a base for the Navy but also as an intermediary between the diplomats of the Mediterranean and London. No longer would there be delays of weeks or months between instructions. Now Corsica could serve as a "sub-imperial center" within the British Empire.[9] The question promptly became what form the British relationship with Corsica would take, and pursuant to that, what form the British status in the Mediterranean would

[7] ADHC 1L 366, 374.

[8] AN AF II/298, 13 March 1794.

[9] The term "sub-imperial center" is found in Thomas Metcalf's *Imperial Connections* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2008), specifically in reference to the Indian Ocean arena in the latter half of the nineteenth century. I use it here in part to posit the similarity between the British in Corsica and the British in India. Indeed, it is worth noting that Gilbert Elliot would later become the Governor-General of India.

take. Corsica was not only the most desirable option strategically but also offered the British a new start in their relationships with the powers of the Mediterranean. In Corsica, they were presented with an opportunity to act not as agents of a Bourbon Restoration, or impulsively push for a quick victory, but rather were free to operate in whatever manner they wanted.

The problem lay in the fact that there was no clear direction in which the British could go. Within the Mediterranean, they were committed to fighting the French Revolution, but their experience in Toulon with both the émigrés and allies initially pushed them away from simply restoring the status quo of the Old Regime. The British eschewed a simple mandate of commercial protection and naval support for allies in favor of a more direct approach. Simultaneously, however, they did not combine this new approach with a corresponding shift in their attitudes towards expanding their commercial and Imperial status. They continued to conceive of their global agenda in a similar fashion as in the previous decades, expanding their presence in the West Indies and elsewhere. Therefore, they began to establish themselves in Corsica under the guise of better combatting the French in the Western Mediterranean, while also establishing their presence there as a territorial expansion.

The task of forming this relationship, both with Corsica and with the Mediterranean states in general, fell to Gilbert Elliot. The Civil Commissioner formerly employed in Toulon, Elliot still retained his commission and his mandate was transferred in March of 1794 to the Mediterranean on the whole, and specifically Corsica.[10] Hood was still in charge of fleet business, and nominally in charge of the Commission, but Elliot was the leading nonmilitary figure for the British in the Mediterranean. His closeness with Burke, as well as his willingness to work within Pitt's government and his broader vision for society, made him the perfect choice for navigating the open spaces of the Western Mediterranean. His willingness to envision a third path between two extremes was perhaps his greatest asset, though unfortunately, he was plagued by both blind optimism and a curious lack of self-confidence. Both traits would trouble him in Corsica, but in 1794 it was his vision for the British in the Mediterranean that was promulgated.

Although forming a relationship with Corsica was one of Elliot's top priorities, actually implementing the plans were dependent on the military success of Hood and Nelson. Therefore, while still negotiating and planning for the union in first half of 1794, Elliot also saw the opportunity to engage

[10] BNA FO 20/2, Downing Street to Elliot, 31 March 1794.

in broader diplomatic work. After all, although Elliot was supremely excited by the possibilities offered by a union with Corsica, on a practical level the British had turned to Corsica in no small part because of its proximity to Italy and the important mission of the Coalition there. The French Army of Italy sat menacingly along the entire Riviera, from Toulon to Vado, and was poised to strike into the heart of Italy. The next chapter discusses the military situation in more depth, but overall in 1794 the British in Corsica served as one of the key checks on their power. Given this stalemate, Elliot looked to Italy in an effort to shift the balance in favor of the British and to form a coalition of Italian states against the French.

In May of 1794, Elliot traveled to Italy. In clarifying his Commission, Grenville gave him full powers to negotiate with the Italian states, especially Genoa, in an effort to preserve them against the menacing French Army. Elliot first traveled to Livorno;[11] there was little love expressed for the British there, and he left offended. This had its roots in the way in which Hervey had manipulated the Grand Duke into an alliance in October, but the relationship had continued to sour into the spring of 1794. In January of 1794, Mrs. Godfrey Brewster, later Lady Holland, wrote, "Manfredini told me that England will cause the ruin of Italy, whereas he could have saved it by temporizing measures."[12] Indeed, if there was one thing Hervey was not, it was temporizing. This ultimately caused his replacement with William Wyndham in early 1794. This appointment as well was met with unease, as Lady Holland wrote, "the Court [of Tuscany] wanted a steady, reasonably man, disposed to soothe matters. God knows poor W. is not capable of filling that post."[13]

By February, Tuscan agents were in contact with François Cacault, La Flotte's replacement in Tuscany who had stayed on in an informal capacity as the French "Agent in Italy" vis-à-vis resuming Tuscan neutrality. Cacault was a well-seasoned diplomat to Italy who had spent most of his time in Naples. He had been appointed to Rome after the Basseville fiasco, but this was short-lived. In Tuscany, however, he would prove to be an influential player. Both he and La Flotte were receptive to the neutrality negotiations as they saw Tuscany, especially Manfredini, as blameless in the breaking of neutrality, remarking constantly on the "perfidity" of Great Britain.[14]

[11] BNA FO 20/5 Grenville to Elliot, 11 March 1794, FO 20/5.

[12] Elizabeth, Lady Holland, *Journal of Elizabeth Lady Holland, 1791–1811,* ed. the Earl of Ilchester (London, 1909), I, 114.

[13] Ibid., 104, 115–116.

[14] AN AF III/87, dossier 372; MAE, Corr. Politique, Toscane, 145bis.

Indeed, Hervey suspected that trade with France never actually stopped, reporting that 28,000 sacks of grain ostensibly purchased for Genoa were likely headed to Nice.[15] Nor was Tuscany willing to help with the refugees, both French and British, pouring in from Toulon in January. Granted, Tuscany was in danger of famine, so the lack of assistance was pragmatic. Nevertheless, it took the combined efforts of Hervey and Elliot to have succor provided even for a few months, and then at great expense.[16] This heartened Cacault to no end and in his constant reports back to Paris he spoke highly of Manfredini and the Grand Duke's willingness to resume neutrality, though also of their continued fear of the British. By late February, however, the Grand Duke himself did commit to writing his interest in negotiating with France to resume neutrality.[17]

The British presence in Corsica heightened the distaste in Tuscany for Great Britain. When Wyndham finally arrived in April of 1794, his primary instructions were to cut off the flow of grain to Nice. His initial report noted the extreme difficulty of this, as most of the grain shipped through Livorno was likely not Tuscan, and the impossibility of affecting the ultimate destination of all goods purchased there. He did suggest, however, that the best way to disrupt the trade was to use small, coast-hugging ships as opposed to frigates.[18] The British had few such ships available, but by the end of April, Corsican privateers began to appear in Tuscan waters. It is unclear whether the British explicitly ordered these to the area, but the disruption of trade to France certainly served British interests. In practice, however, it soon became clear that these privateers were not operating with any sort of discretion. Numerous incidents arose involving Corsicans attacking legitimate Tuscan fishermen, as well as Genoese who had permission to be in Tuscan waters.[19]

Thus, when Elliot arrived in Florence in May of 1794, there was little chance of the Grand Duke agreeing to anything resembling the Italian League Elliot envisioned as necessary to repel the French. Between the misadventures of Hervey and Wyndham, the ongoing Toulonese refugee fiasco, and the piratical actions of the Corsicans, there is little surprise that the Grand Duke was a recalcitrant ally, and that Elliot's arrival only served

[15] BNA FO 79/9, Hervey to Grenville, 22 December 1793.

[16] BNA FO 528/15; FO 79/9 Udney to Grenville, 27 December 1793.

[17] MAE Corr. Politique 146, Corisini to Cacault, 26 February 1794; AN AF/3, 87, "*Mémoire sur la Conduit de la Toscane avec le République de France*," n.d., signed by Carletti.

[18] BNA FO 79/10, Wyndham to Grenville, 4 April 1794.

[19] BNA FO 79/10, Serristori to Wyndham, 26 April 1794.

to further speed up the secret negotiations with France. Indeed, from the French perspective, if they could make use of Porto Ferrairo on Elba they could easily strike to regain Corsica and attack the Papal States, though a resumption of Tuscan participation in French Mediterranean trade via a return to neutrality was also more than acceptable.[20] The Grand Duke and Manfredini received Elliot's attempt to paint a picture of the danger of the French as starkly ironic considering the aggressive actions of the British over the past half of a year. By forcing the Tuscans to renounce neutrality in 1793, Hervey effectively doomed Elliot's mission in 1794. Similarly, by taking Corsica, there was the very real question of who posed the greater threat—the French in the Riviera or the British in Corsica?

Genoa posed similar problems. As mentioned in the previous chapter, while the Coalition forces were in control of Toulon and besieged by the French, Genoa had continued to facilitate the trade of necessary supplies to the French Army. Just as with Tuscany, the trade occurred via ships that were able to slip along the coast and avoid the British fleet, forcing a diplomatic solution as opposed to simply a military blockade. Francis Drake, the minister in Genoa, was in constant communication with the Genoese government complaining about this lack of neutrality, but the government pleaded ignorance. In reality, the Genoese had close financial ties to Paris, which made it difficult to stand against the French. They hoped to receive payment (in specie, not assignats) for interest on loans they had made to the Convention, so they had a vested interest in remaining on good terms with France.[21] This state of affairs was exceedingly frustrating to Hood, who attempted to force the issue from Toulon with the seizure of the French frigate *Modeste* and a subsequent blockade of Genoa.

By 1794, however, this blockade had been ineffective and the British called it off. Grenville instructed Elliot to deal with Genoa diplomatically. Elliot's instructions in regards it were to be especially careful, as too much force would drive the Genoese into the arms of France, but too much leniency would open the door for further French influence and perhaps Jacobin rebellions.[22] This neglected the impact of the British increasing their presence in the Mediterranean through their union with Corsica. The British had to adapt to not interacting with Genoa from London,

[20] MAE Corr. Politique Livourno 61, Cacault to Committee of Public Safety, April 1793.

[21] BNA FO 28/6, Drake to Grenville, 14 Sept. 1793. See also René Boudard, *Gênes et la France dans la Deuxième Moitié du XVIII siècle* (Paris: Mouton, 1962).

[22] BNA FO 20/5, Grenville to Elliot, 11 March 1794.

but rather from Corsica. As was mentioned with Tuscany, the Corsicans had their fair share of enemies in the Mediterranean. Genoa especially was a target for the Corsican privateers, as Genoa had never fully abandoned its claim to the island and the Corsicans well remembered the excesses of Genoese rule on Corsica.

This proved a sticking point in Elliot's negotiations with Genoa. One particular issue was that the Corsica privateers, or Corsican pirates, depending on the perspective, were flying the British flag. In May, no official union existed as yet, so when the Genoese government complained to Britain about Corsican boats flying the British flag attacking Genoese vessels, Elliot feigned ignorance. He claimed that Britain could not be held responsible for the actions of random vessels that chose to fly their flag without permission.[23] However, while simultaneously disavowing the Corsicans (and this strategy would not work in the coming months when similar situations arose after the union was complete), Elliot also established the British as protectors of Corsica. When Genoa and Tuscany refused to recognize the Corsican flag, Elliot penned a memorial expressly stating that the Corsican flag was under special protection from Britain.[24]

These contradictions demonstrate the difficulty of the British position diplomatically. To truly establish themselves in the Mediterranean, they needed to assert their ability to protect the smaller powers from the French, and the loss of Toulon had not done much to inspire confidence. Of course, in Elliot's opinion both the loss of Toulon and the lack of confidence in Britain that the small powers expressed was rooted in the failure of the Coalition, not the British themselves. Had the Austrians earlier sent the 5000 men they had promised to harass the French and relieve Toulon, the French would never have advanced along the coast. From Genoa then, Elliot made his way to the Austrian Court at Milan. There, he attempted to persuade the Austrians to take over Savona, which would allow the British to make use of the Bay of Vado. Although the Court at Milan was generally friendly and receptive to Elliot and the position of the British, they proclaimed ignorance when it came to practical details, assuring him these were military matters that should be discussed with General de Vins.[25]

[23] BNA FO 20/5, Elliot to Grenville, 6 May 1794.
[24] BNA FO 20/5, Elliot to Drake 6 April 1794.
[25] BNA FO 28/9 Drake to Grenville, 29 August and 16, 24, 27, 30 September 1794.

Elliot departed somewhat disheartened, particularly at the hostility shown by the Court at Milan to the Savoyard Court at Turin, but also at the apparent "imbecility and incapacity of the Turin government." Austria and Sardinia were extremely distrustful of each other. The Austrians feared that the Piedmont–Sardinian king was trying to offer Nice and Savoy, which the French had earlier seized from them, for part of Austrian Lombardy and part of the Genoese Republic. The Savoyards resented placing their troops under the command of the Austrian General de Vins, who appeared to be more concerned with watching them than watching the French.[26]

Overall then, Elliot's mission to Italy was a frustrating failure. The British position in Corsica caused its own share of problems, but there were deeper issues as well. From a Coalition standpoint, Britain stood relatively isolated in the Mediterranean. Italy's weakness, Elliot concluded, lay in the characters of most of the rulers, who shrank from the responsibility of "adopting a bold and original policy."[27] In Elliot's view, it thus fell to Britain, and to Britain alone, to forge ahead with creating a new international order in the Mediterranean. Corsica was instrumental in this, demonstrating the benefits and feasibility of a close tie with it, and the ability of Britain to protect the small powers against the French.

The negotiations for Corsica had begun prior to Elliot's trip, as early as January 7, 1794. Paoli's first proposal back in October of 1793 offered the British use of their ports in exchange for guaranteeing Corsican autonomy. By January of 1794, both sides rejected this measure in favor of a more direct, complete political union between Corsica and Britain. For the British, this was an adaptation of their strategy in the Mediterranean intended to avoid the problems that had arisen with Toulon and Tuscany. For the Corsicans, this union served the purpose of guaranteeing that the British would not simply hand Corsica back to the French at the end of the war.

Nevertheless, although they agreed on the function of the union between Corsica and Britain, the form was more problematic. Elliot left the meeting with Paoli of the opinion that an English Vice-Roy would be welcomed. This Vice-Roy would be at the head of the government, would be in command of the island's militia, and would retain the power

[26] Royal Maritime Museum (hereafter RMM) ELL/154A, Elliot to Grenville, 11 May 1794. This dynamic will be investigated more fully in the next chapter.

[27] Ibid., Elliot to Hippisley, 22 May 1794.

of veto on any laws. Aside from this, Elliot anticipated the government of this new Corsican state mostly to be modeled after the previous Corsican Constitution of Paoli. In his proposal to London, he highlighted the myriad of benefits derived from Corsica, while noting that it would be economically self-sufficient and for the most part govern itself.[28]

On the surface, this was acceptable to Paoli. He was well aware of his island's need for the British, though he was keenly interested in the British not knowing exactly how pressing it was.[29] He also understood the necessity of ceding Corsica's sovereignty in exchange for protection and the all-important autonomy that the island desperately sought (though this complicated relationship between autonomy and sovereignty would cause issues later). Simply opening their ports to the British was not a sustainable path towards autonomy, and by making the choice to join with Britain, the Corsicans exercised more agency than they ever had under the French or Genoese.

Nonetheless, just as Elliot was oversimplifying the situation to London (Corsica would never be self-sufficient), so too Paoli was oversimplifying the situation for Elliot. He did not intend to step down from politics, envisioning himself as the Vice-Roy of the island. Self-rule was, after all, the end goal, and the lack of Corsicans in leadership positions had been a constant gripe under the Genoese, Old Regime, and Revolutionary regimes. Three months after the initial meeting, Paoli wrote to his friend, Galeazzi, expressing the benefits of actively choosing to join with Britain as opposed to being reclaimed by France: "Corsica reunited to France was no longer Corsica. The kingdom of Corsica will henceforth at least be as free as that of England."[30]

With these preliminary negotiations completed, if not fully settled, Elliot left on his diplomatic rounds. His failures throughout Italy only heightened the importance of firming up the union between Corsica and Britain, demonstrating the benefits of a close relationship. Following the fall of Bastia and the expulsion of the French, the first official step in uniting Corsica with Britain was the summoning of a Consulta. This was done quickly, with elections held on June 1 and the first meeting in Corte on

[28] BNA FO 20/2 Elliot to Dundas, 21 June 1794.

[29] J. P McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo Di Borgo in Corsica and After, 1764–1821: Not Quite a Vendetta* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), 212–213.

[30] Pierre Tomi, "The Anglo-Corsican kingdom," *Corsican Studies*, no. 9 (1956), 29 (citing Paoli to Galeazzi, 24 April 1794).

the June 8. On June 14, 1794 the Consulta, representing the Corsican people, voted to officially break with France and to join with Britain. The Consulta then set up a committee to compose a suitable Constitution. Within two days, the committee returned with a Constitution that the Consulta immediately voted on and unanimously accepted.

On June 19, Elliot was able to receive from Paoli on behalf of all the Corsican people, the tender of the crown and the sovereignty of Corsica to His Majesty King George of Great Britain.[31] In his initial report to Dundas on June 21, Elliot wrote the following:

> His majesty has acquired a crown; those who bestow it have acquired liberty. The British nation has extended its political and commercial sphere by the accession of Corsica; Corsica has added new securities to her ancient possessions, and has opened fresh fields of prosperity and wealth, by her liberal incorporation with a vast and powerful empire.[32]

The General Council, after hearing from Paoli, described the situation as follows:

> … [I]n short, brave Corsicans, we are free. By our constancy, firmness and courage, we have acquired the enjoyment of the advantages we inherit from our ancestors, *liberty and religion*. However, it would be but little to have regained this noble succession, if our efforts and prudence were unable to secure it forever. To insure the success of those efforts, and to direct our prudence, a perfect union is necessary; our general resolutions must be formed with a view to our present situation and our future expectations.[33]

Thus was born the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom.

R. R. Palmer termed it almost entirely a reaction "typical of the European counter-revolution."[34] There is something to this perspective—Elliot, as has been mentioned, was a disciple of Burke and was certainly no proponent of Revolutionary principles. Part of the basis of the Union was, according to Elliot, that Corsica "rejected with horror the poisonous

[31] BNA FO 20/2 Elliot to Dundas, 21 1794.

[32] *The Annual Register* (London, 1794), Appendix to the Chronicle, 97.

[33] Ibid., 102.

[34] Robert Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760–1800* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 358–360.

and counterfeit liberty of France.…"[35] Paoli too was an Anglophile who at times vehemently opposed Revolutionary principles. To convene the Consulta, he said of Corsica's relationship with the French Revolution, "…in all these agitations we have kept ourselves united, and exempt from the horrors of licentiousness and anarchy… an irrefragable proof that you are deserving of true liberty.…"[36]

Nonetheless, while Counter-Revolution and reaction can be used as frameworks to understand the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom and its Constitution, these terms miss the nuance within the ideological and practical motivations of both the British and French. For Paoli and the Corsicans, a mélange of different influences created the Constitution. It was simultaneously a mix of the former Constitution used by Paoli in 1755, the demands listed by the Corsicans in the *Cahier* of 1789, and a mirroring of the current British form of government. In other words, the Corsican Constitution in 1794 represented continuity with the Old Regime, the reforms of the Revolution, and the creation of a new form of political identity—the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom, born from British entrenchment in the Mediterranean. In this sense, Corsica is exceptional.

Many of the other Mediterranean powers went through a similar process of mediating between the Old Regime and Revolutionary forms of international politics, and by the end of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era, multiple new states had been created and rearranged. Prior to the Sister Republics of the later Revolution or various kingdoms created by Napoleon, however, the Corsican Constitution provided an alternative model for statecraft in the Revolutionary Mediterranean at the interstices of Revolution and Counter-Revolution.

In addition to the active role Corsicans, or at least Paoli, played in the determination of their form of government, what also sets the Corsican Constitution and subsequent Kingdom apart is the fact that this was solely a British and Corsican creation, not French, and not decided in conjunction with any other powers. This is one of the purest expressions of the transitioning nature of British conceptions of Empire and state-building. They viewed Corsica through the lens of the failure with the American colonies, the developing Irish experiment, the renewal of the East India Company's Charter for India in 1793, and the more recent loss of Toulon.

This is not to say that in the middle of the Revolutionary wars the British government cast a mold that they hoped to follow in their future imperial

[35] *Annual Register,* 1794, 97.
[36] *Annual Register*, 1794, 98.

ventures. Expediency and utility were more important in Corsica in 1794. Still, Gilbert Elliot and his advisors, as well as the government approving it in London, created the Constitution while keenly aware of not repeating the mistakes of the past, complicating the Counter-Revolutionary narrative. For Britain, the Constitution represented a combination of aspects of the Old Regime with a reaction to the French Revolution, resulting in the creation of an early form of Dominion status. Soon a deluge of problems caused, at least in part, by the very act of creating the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom would drown both the project of the Constitution and the practice of having a British Kingdom in the middle of the Mediterranean. Despite this eventual failure, the Constitution itself remains representative of the transitioning perspectives on state-building in the age of the Enlightenment and Revolutions.

Given the significance of the Constitution, there are several salient points worth mentioning before investigating the practical implications of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom in the Western Mediterranean. First and perhaps most important, the Constitution granted Corsica independence, but directly under the sovereignty of the British crown. The Corsican state technically would be autonomous while remaining accountable to the British government. The British government had first tested this construction of the colonial state, with limited success, in Ireland and Canada. The intent was for Corsica to govern itself internally, while in matters of imperial concern defer to the British. This was intended to ameliorate many of the issues perceived to be at the heart of the War of American Independence.

The British understood that trying to understand and legislate on a specific, local level was nearly impossible, but they also were unwilling to repeat the mistake of the American colonies, which was allowing too much freedom and leeway in terms of imperial affairs. To that end, Article 3, Chap. IX of the Constitution reads:

> … [T]he parliament of Corsica will always manifest its readiness and deference to adopt all regulations, consistent with its present constitution, which shall be enacted [by] his majesty in his parliament of Great Britain for the extension and advantage of the external commerce of the empire and of its dependencies.[37]

[37] *Annual Register*, 104.

Although the British stance on imperial matters was strict, the structure of the government on the island was remarkably open. An exceptionally large electorate chose the Corsican Parliament, with "all Corsican citizens of twenty-five years of age who have been resident at least one year prior … and who are possessors of land" allowed to vote.[38]

Furthermore, there was a specific clause that forbade "persons employed in collecting the revenue, receivers and collectors of taxes, those who have pensions, or who are in the service of a foreign power, and priests" from being members of the houses of Parliament. This was a sensitive issue for many Corsicans tired of being ruled by exploitative or absentee administrators in the Old Regime. The government would hold elections every two years, and while the King reserved the right to dissolve the Parliament, he was constitutionally bound to convene another within 40 days. In practical terms, Parliament had a reasonably wide range of influence, especially in regard to taxation and matters of religion.[39]

The Constitution abolished the tithe, but named Catholicism the state religion of Corsica. The Constitution also explicitly espoused toleration for all religions, but the ability for the Corsican Parliament to determine the exact nature of the relationship between state and religion was another crucial reform allowed by the British. Military and trade matters remained in the hands of the King, as they fell under the imperial side of the union, as well as appointment to all offices of the government. Critically, however, "the ordinary employments of justice and of the administration of the public money shall be conferred upon natives of Corsica, or persons naturalized Corsicans in virtue of the law."[40] Again, the reaction against misadministration was strong in the Constitution of 1794, and Paoli's address to the Parliament in support of the Constitution specifically mentions the "cruel and treacherous arrangements made by the three commissioners of the French Convention."[41] The British swore not to alienate Corsica or ever cede it to a foreign power, or do anything to prejudice its unity or indivisibility. They made every effort to ensure that the Corsicans felt secure in their relationship with Great Britain.

[38] Ibid., Chap. II, Article 2. This land qualification was negligible as nearly all Corsicans owned at least a small parcel of land.

[39] Ibid., Chap. II, Article 10.

[40] Ibid., Chap. V, Articles 8 and 9.

[41] *Annual Register*, 97.

The British also needed to feel secure however, and therefore put a great deal of emphasis on a strong executive branch. This again came as a reaction broadly against the American Revolution, and more recently against the leadership tension in Toulon. Consequently, the representative of the King on the island would take the form of a Vice-Roy, placing this individual as one of the highest ranked in the entire British Empire. The King appointed the Vice-Roy, not the Parliament, and the Vice-Roy was in no legal sense bound to the Parliament. It could technically petition the King directly to recall the Vice-Roy, but in all other matters, the Vice-Roy reigned supreme. The Vice-Roy could veto laws passed by Parliament and could choose his own Council with no regard to whether they were native Corsicans.

Along with the normal process of law that was under control of the Parliament and Corsicans, there was also an Extraordinary Tribunal.[42] It was to be "composed of five judges, appointed by the Vice-Roy, and commissioned to judge upon any impeachment from the house of parliament, or upon all charges made, on the part of the King, or prevarication or other treasonable actions."[43] In terms of what these crimes actually were, interpretation was left open: "The nature of said crimes, and the form of the trial, shall be determined upon by a special law; but a jury shall be allowed in every case of this sort."[44] Neither the British nor the Corsicans anticipated just how frequently the Vice-Roy would use this particular clause in the coming turbulent years.

Although this might seem borderline authoritarian and at odds with some of the more liberal aspects of the Constitution, this strong executive was very much in line not only with British policy at the time but also Corsican. Paoli himself had an almost monarchical-level authority in Corsica, so it was not a leap for either him or the population to accept that approval of laws hinged on the approval of a solitary figure in power. Although it rankled to not have the Council made up of Corsicans, nor was it closed to Corsicans, and indeed Pozzo di Borgo (who heavily contributed to drafting the Constitution itself) filled one seat for nearly the entirety of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom. Furthermore, the Constitution addressed nearly every substantive complaint compared to the previ-

[42] Ibid., Chaps. VI and VII.
[43] Ibid., Chap. VII, Article I.
[44] Ibid., Article II.

ous administrations of the Genoese, French monarchy, and French Revolutionaries. The Vice-Roy could not diminish that fact.

Nevertheless, the question soon became who would be chosen as Vice-Roy. Paoli agreed to this position as codified in the Constitution on the assumption that the King would offer it to him. Elliot, however, was just as adamant that he be granted the position both for the health of Corsica and for the health of British relations in the broader Mediterranean. Domestically, he was sure the fractious nature of the Corsicans would rise as soon as Paoli was gone, and potentially before, necessitating a unifying British presence. Even though this was likely an accurate anticipation, events would prove him overly optimistic in his own ability to prevent ruptures, especially given that he was now starting his tenure with Paoli not as an ally but as a competitor. Elliot would try, but ultimately fail, to account for the various forces at play internally in Corsica. The strength of the position of Vice-Roy served only to provide his enemies a target, rather than to serve as a check on licentiousness.

The Vice-Roy was also in charge of Corsican exterior relations and was the ranking diplomatic figure for all British consuls and ministers in the Western Mediterranean. The Constitution of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom established the position of Vice-Roy not simply with an eye towards a strong executive branch on the island, but with the intent of expanding the British sphere of influence throughout the Mediterranean. For Paoli to hold this post was inconceivable to the British government. The post would go to Elliot, who would attempt to use this position to unite the interests of the various Mediterranean powers with that of Britain and, crucially, against those of France. While the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom was a direct move by the British beyond commercial ties or nominal alliances in the Mediterranean, the goal remained the defeat of the French Revolution. Elliot and the British were sure that all that was needed was a strong British naval presence and a diplomatic hand to guide the Mediterranean states into a determined stance against the French. This very act of claiming Corsica, however, was contentious, and instead of providing a model for unity across the Mediterranean, it served as a further obstacle for British diplomatic negotiations, and further fodder for the French to claim that the British were out only for their own commercial and political gain.

The problems caused with Genoa and Tuscany by the British presence in Corsica persisted throughout the next two years because the Corsicans proved nearly impossible to control. They constantly harassed Genoese

vessels, preventing the British from making any headway in enticing the Genoese away from the French. The Genoese also protested that if the treaty with Old Regime France was null, Corsica should revert to Genoese possession. In terms of defending the stability and balance of the Old Order, this was a somewhat awkward claim for the British to reconcile. Elliot ultimately recommended to Grenville that if the Genoese pressed their claim and forced the British to defend their union with the island, they simply could claim that Corsica was theirs by right of conquest.[45] The Genoese in the end did not press the issue, but this shows the tension between the British placing their new status in the Mediterranean within the context of the Old Regime and their initial raison d'être for fighting the French.

Genoa was not the only Italian territory to make a claim on Corsica. The Papal States had a small claim dating back to the Middle Ages that they decided to press, perhaps in reaction to some of the ecclesiastical reforms that formed part of the new Constitution. The abolition of the tithe was especially objectionable, as it smacked of 1789. For Elliot, the tithe was simply an excuse to "satisfy some fleshly appetite of mother church," but this Anglican perspective was at odds with the reactions against the radical Revolution that dominated the Roman relationship with France and religious reform.[46]

The fact that Britain had no official diplomatic representation in Rome further complicated this issue. Sir John Hippisley carried on informal communication, but Hippisley misled Rome into thinking that Britain would be willing to trade the reopening of diplomatic relations for concessions in regard to Corsica. Frederick North replaced Hippisley in May, en route to join Elliot in Corsica to assist in his diplomatic mission and the administration of the Kingdom. North was a much more accomplished negotiator than Hippisley, but he too had difficulties in assuaging the Pope and obtaining agreement to Elliot's proposals.[47]

In addition to already present difficulties between Britain and Rome, the other Mediterranean players also entered into this discussion. The Genoese bishops urged the Pope to stand against British pressure.[48] So

[45] BNA FO 20/5 Elliot to Grenville, 21 July 1794.

[46] Maurice Jollivet, *Les Anglais dans la Méditerranée (1794–1797): Un Royaume Anglo-Corse* (Paris, 1897), 258–259.

[47] BNA FO 20/6, Elliot to Portland, 23 September 1794; 23 May 1795; FO 20/7 Elliot to Hippisley, 31 August 1794.

[48] BNA FO 28/8, Drake to Elliot, 21 Sept. 1794.

too did the Spanish, foretelling future difficulties. The Spanish ambassador argued that accepting the British into Corsica undermined French Old Regime claims on the island, as Louis XV had obtained concessions from the Pope concerning appointments to Corsican sees. In addition, the Spanish argued that the British in Corsica were embracing an inherently revolutionary idea of people having the right to determine their own form of government.[49] This resonated with the Vatican and its anger at the religious reforms in the Constitution. Here the British decision to embrace a more liberal Constitution in Corsica stood in opposition to the more conservative strands of Counter-Revolution.[50]

Despite this preponderance of diplomatic weight against him, North ultimately was successful in his negotiations with Rome.[51] For the Papal States, there was no real alternative to Britain, and so it was less a matter of whether negotiations would succeed and more what the precise result would be, and North proved to be an able negotiator. So positive was the impression he made in Rome that the Pope remarked that it was a shame North was born a Protestant.[52] North's success notwithstanding, however, this was a minor issue though that still managed to take up no small amount of time and resources, and eventually it brought Britain no closer to further developing the Coalition against the French. In short, the campaign to combat the French in the Mediterranean was constantly waylaid by the actual act of being in the Mediterranean.

The Spanish Court had further reason to be upset beyond their vicarious outrage at the Papal States negotiations. The Spanish repeatedly complained to both the British Ambassador to Spain and directly to Gilbert Elliot in Corsica concerning Corsican privateers illegally holding Spanish vessels. The exact process that occurred gives some indication to the lack of actual control that the British exerted over the Corsicans. Essentially, Corsican privateers would capture Spanish merchant vessels, knowing that the Spanish were either allied with their protectors, the British, or after 1795 afforded neutral status. They would bring the ships into Bastia where the English-run prize court would reject them as illegitimate prizes.

At that point, the Corsican captains would approach the Spanish captains and explain that if they did not want an appeal of that decision, which

[49] M. Canepa, "Riformo Religiose in Corsica," *Mediterranea* (Cagliari, 1928), 7.
[50] McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo di Borgo*, 270; Canepa, 8.
[51] See Gregory, Chap. 6. The primary source documentation is found in FO 43/1.
[52] Ibid.

would further hold up the vessels in question, sometimes for a period of months, they would "compensate" the Corsicans with sums that varied from several hundred dollars to several thousand. The Spanish, forced to either wait through an appeal process or to make the deal, very often made the deal. They then complained vehemently about this practice to Elliot. His response was to note that the Corsicans did this against British wishes and that they would make every effort to put a stop to it. Not surprisingly, those efforts were limited and ineffective.[53]

This example of conflict between Spain and Corsica, however, took place predominately in 1796, even though the Spanish relationship with Britain began deteriorating well before then, and with causes that went well beyond the British acquisition of Corsica. Although Corsica certainly was an issue for the Spanish, it was one of a myriad that ultimately highlights a further tension in the Coalition. In addition to military struggles and the diplomatic morass of the Mediterranean, Spain added a layer of complexity because they saw Britain as direct competition both in the Mediterranean and in the global order, especially commercially across the Atlantic. Although Corsica, the Italian states, and the Barbary Coast states were all clearly subordinate in status to the British, the Spanish saw the Revolutionary wars as an opportunity to reclaim their status as a Great Power. With the active and persistent British presence in the Mediterranean, the Spanish were threatened, ultimately allowing the French to arouse suspicion over British claims and interests, leading to the Second Treaty of San Ildefonso in 1796 in which Spain declared war on Great Britain.

The roots of this process can be traced from the disputes over Gibraltar throughout the eighteenth century, but the most recent example in the Mediterranean was the tension between the two powers over Toulon. At that point, the difference between having a common enemy and a common goal was clear. Incidents, such as the dispute over who was in control of the troops in Toulon, and even the Spanish leaving the Toulonese refugees with the British in Italy, showed the fragility of the bonds between the two nations. The instructions to the Earl of Bute, the incoming Ambassador to Spain in 1795, specifically directed him to determine the Spanish position regarding the *Pact Famille* and a Restoration of the Bourbon's to the throne.[54]

[53] BNA FO 72/42, 13 July 1796.
[54] BNA FO 72/37, 5 April 1795.

The British themselves were ambiguous on the subject, but they were keenly aware that cooperating with Spain was essential to their success in the Mediterranean. Bute also was instructed to inform Spain that in the matter of indemnification, Britain would side with Spain to see that it was fairly compensated for its contributions. While Spain was having success in early 1794 against the French Army in the Pyrenees, the prospect of keeping the alliance together with indemnification seemed promising.

Nevertheless, just as Toulon became a moot point in 1794, so too did the Spanish presence in the French territories. A series of defeats throughout the year ended with the French inflicting a serious defeat on the Spanish in Catalonia. By the middle of 1795, the French were victorious at Bilbao and were headed to Pamplona when the Peace of Basel was signed, concluding the separate peace that Britain so dreaded. Leading to this peace, which is examined in more detail in the next chapter, the British asked the Spanish Prime Minister whether this was the same France they declared war on in 1793, to which the Spanish Prime Minister, Manuel Godoy, refused to give a straight answer.[55]

This young Prime Minister did not engender a great deal of confidence in the British representative to Spain, Francis James Jackson, who was the interim ambassador while the Earl of Bute made his way to Spain to assume the post. In April of 1795, on the subject of the Spanish Navy, Jackson noted that Prime Minister Godoy deferred to the consultation of Mons. Valdes, "who finds too plausible a pretext for persisting in this system of inactivity…"[56] Stretched thin across the Mediterranean, the British were continually pressing Spain for assistance in either patrolling or pressuring the growing French fleet, but none was offered.[57] He went on to note:

> The most striking symptom that I have yet perceived of the sensations produced here by this success of His Majesty's naval forces is an observance of strict silence on that subject by the Spanish Minister… In the public, it has occasioned severe reflections on the situation of the Spanish navy.[58]

As the military situation in Spain worsened, and it seemed more and more likely that Spain would sue for peace, Jackson's scorn for Godoy increased: "It is clear that the mind of the Spanish minister, unable to withstand the

[55] BNA FO 72/37, 13 April 1795.
[56] BNA FO 72/37, Jackson to Grenville, 1 April 1795.
[57] Records of this can be found throughout BNA ADM 1/393 and ADM 1/394.
[58] BNA FO 72/37, Jackson to Grenville, 1 April 1795.

weight that oppresses it, is struggling in an unequal contest and does not possess sufficient resources in itself … to foresee the advantages of persisting in war."[59]

Jackson's assessment of Godoy may have been harsh, but most historians and contemporaries of Godoy agree that he was both difficult to work with and easily manipulated by those around him. When Bute finally did arrive, he managed to develop a workable relationship with Godoy, but he was unable to prevent the signing of the Peace of Basel. It is perhaps unfair to cast the decision to make peace simply in terms of Godoy's capriciousness. By June Godoy was openly referencing the deplorable state of Spain's economy and had by some accounts became paranoid after he nearly lost his life in a series of riots.[60]

Bute and Grenville had hoped the alliances with Russia and Austria would reinvigorate Spain, but this was not the case, and reports were steadily increasing of the failures of the Spanish Army on the frontier.[61] In July, Bute reported to Grenville that Godoy had pressed him for guarantees of pecuniary assistance from Britain, but that Bute had been left "tonguetied" because he was not authorized to give assurances.[62] By the time a response had come with some small offers of loans, the Spanish and French had signed the Peace of Basel.

To move beyond Godoy and the fortunes of war, however, Britain itself was partially responsible for the Peace of Basel. As Spain struggled, it was assumed in London that its defeat was inevitable, and any assistance would be wasted. This then allowed the Spanish, especially Godoy—then known as "Prince of Peace" after the signing of the Peace document—to blame the British. In this narrative they, at best, were poor allies who had failed to support Spain monetarily. At worst, they were actively working to the detriment of Spain in hopes of supplanting them in the Mediterranean, Caribbean, and South America.[63] There also were accusations of smuggling in pacquet boats—several men were found with large amounts of cash strapped to their persons. In this situation the Spanish accused the British of being the culprits, and the British consuls responded by acknowl-

[59] Ibid., Jackson to Grenville, 15 April 1795. The overall message of this dispatch is how Godoy was paranoid and insecure.

[60] Ibid., Bute to Grenville, 23 June.

[61] BNA FO 72/38, Bute to Grenville, 7 July 1795.

[62] Ibid., 15 July.

[63] Ibid., Bute to Grenville, 15 Aug. 1795.

edging, indeed, that smuggling was going on, but not by the British; and it was not Britain's job to police the Spanish ports.[64]

Perhaps the most egregious example of this disconnect between Britain and Spain after the Peace of Basel was the case of the French frigate *L'Alerte*. This ship repeatedly broke the conventions of neutral ports, either immediately following ships out of port and taking them as prizes, or sitting too close to the port and accosting British ships on their way out. Despite the numerous complaints Bute passed along to Godoy, the Spanish refused to take any action except responding that the British had been harassing Spanish vessels consistently as well.[65] This highlights the difference between Britain's interactions with Spain and a smaller power such as Genoa. In a similar circumstance with the *Modeste* in 1793, Hood simply captured the offending ship, responding to a French violation of neutrality with a violation of his own. By 1795, the much more cautious Admiral Hotham had replaced Hood, and antagonizing Spain was a much riskier proposition than antagonizing Genoa.

The continuation of these complaints led Spain beyond simply making peace with France to declaring war on Britain with the Treaty of San Ildefonso in 1796. This critical turning point is examined more closely in Chaps. 6 and 7; however, at its root was the suspicion of the Spanish that Britain was not acting in the best interests of Spain or the Coalition, but instead was only seeking to expand its influence both commercially and politically. From the Spanish perspective there was a plethora of evidence for this in the small issues that Godoy complained about to Bute (e.g., the Corsican privateers, more pacquet boat smuggling, a counterfeiting ring encouraged by the British), and even a disagreement about the postal fees charged to the Spanish minister in London.[66]

From the British perspective, tension also was rising, again evidenced by seemingly small issues such as Bute's wine and snuff being embargoed and never delivered, as well as some more serious accusations.[67] Bute received a steady stream of correspondence concerning Spanish preference for the

[64] Ibid., Blight to Bute, 1 Aug. 1795.

[65] Most the action regarding the "Alert" took place in BNA FO 72/40 and 41 in 1795, though the issue was still brought up in FO 72/42 as late as 11 July 1796.

[66] For these incidents, see BNA FO 72/41 and FO 72/43.

[67] The issue of the wine and snuff was brought up in response to Las Casas complaining about postage fees; BNA FO 72/42, Bute to Grenville, 16 July.

French, despite their avowed neutrality.[68] These issues steadily drove the two courts apart and made war seem not only a possibility but also an inevitability. Indeed, the situation deteriorated enough that rumors of war between Spain and Britain made their way to the Caribbean, prior to any hostilities commencing, where some minor disturbances broke out.[69]

Thus, despite, or as a result of, their continued naval dominance of the Western Mediterranean and overall increased presence in the region by means of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom, the British position grew increasingly perilous. In addition to Spain and Italy, the British also had to contend with the Barbary Coast states. In 1794, the Algerians took a number of Corsican coral fishers as slaves for ransom.[70] At face value, there was nothing new or novel about Algerians capturing and enslaving Corsicans. There was a long history of antagonism between Corsica and the Barbary Coast states, particularly Algiers.

The Corsican flag itself was instigation because the Moor's head on a white sheet was a reference to the Corsican beheading of a legendary Barbary Coast pirate. More recently, when Corsica was part of France, there had been significant tension over coral fishing rights. In short, the Compagnie d'Afrique had an arrangement with the Dey of Algiers, but the Corsicans did not. After 1769, however, an attack on Corsicans equaled an attack on France. Therefore, an agreement was reached between the Corsicans, the French government, the Compagnie d'Afrique, and the Dey of Algiers that involved no small number of bribes and compromises on the part of the French; however, it achieved an uneasy balance that held up until the Revolutionary wars.[71]

The British, meanwhile, also had a workable relationship with the Dey of Algiers prior to 1794. The French may have had more concessions from the Dey, but they also had more interests. The British were content with a system by which the Barbary Coast pirates did not attack ships with British passport (i.e., identification). At the start of the Revolutionary Wars there was some consternation because of a delayed "gift" to the Dey of Algiers (in simpler terms, a bribe), as well as some poor choices made on the part

[68] This occurred in the Mediterranean but also in the Caribbean, demonstrating the global implications of this struggle, despite the focus of this project on the Mediterranean; BNA FO 72/41.

[69] BNA FO 72/40, Bute to Grenville 23 March 1796.

[70] The general account of this incident is in BNA ADM 1/394, FO 3/7, and principally in FO 20/7.

[71] J. B. Gai, "*Les corailleurs corses en Barbarie*," *Revue de la Corse* 20 (Bastia, 1939).

of the Consul, Charles Logie. The Dey also protested, in all likelihood correctly, that the governors at Gibraltar and Mahon were abusing the system and selling British passports under the table.[72] Regardless of these issues, however, relations between Great Britain and Algiers remained peaceful, if not cordial, and the situation in Tripoli and Tunis was likewise satisfactory.

With the forming of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom, the British initially proposed that the Dey respect Corsican ships with British passports, and that the agreement concerning coral fishing rights continue, except with Britain as the third party instead of France.[73] Two issues prevented this transition from working peacefully and are indicative of the problems the British faced in the Mediterranean. First, while flying the British flag, the Corsicans themselves had begun to ignore the agreement over access to coral fishing grounds; indeed, they had behaved aggressively towards ships from Algiers. Though flying the Corsican flag would have been just as, if not more, incensing to the Dey of Algiers, the fact remained that, as far as he was concerned, British ships were behaving belligerently towards him.[74]

The second issue was that the Dey refused to recognize British protection over Corsica and refused to extend the same deal with Britain as he had with France. Elliot was hopeful that Tunis and Tripoli would fall in line, but Algiers was recalcitrant. This can be attributed partly to the fact that whenever it was possible to demand a further bribe, the Dey of Algiers was likely to ask for one. Though, most certainly the French also played a part in complicating matters. To acknowledge British control of Corsica was to reject the continued French claim on the island. This was not an inherently problematic idea if it had been in the best interests of the Dey to make this choice, whether by virtue of force or favors from the British. Yet, given how thinly spread the British were in the Mediterranean in 1794, there was no incentive for the Dey of Algiers to recognize Corsica as British. As Elliot noted in 1795, his position in regard to Algiers, and indeed most of the Mediterranean, was that he was "trying to make bricks without straw."[75]

[72] BNA FO 3/7, 1 June 1792.

[73] J. B. Gai, "*Les corailleurs corses en Barbarie*," *Revue de la Corse* 20 (Bastia, 1939).

[74] BNA FO 20/2 Elliot to H. Dundas, 2 July 1794; FO 20/7 Portland to Elliot, 4 September 1795; Elliot to Portland, 3 April 1795; Godfrey Fisher, *Barbary Legend; War, Trade and Piracy in North Africa, 1415–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), 289.

[75] BNA FO 20/7, Elliot to Portland, 3 April 1795.

This diplomatic maneuvering came to a head with the capture of several Corsican ships in August of 1794. A British brig of 18 guns and a cutter were escorting a number of Corsican vessels from Ajaccio and Bonifacio to the coral fishing grounds. These ships had British passports but flew the Corsican flag. Initially, two French frigates of 44 guns each attacked them. The French captured both the brig and cutter and brought them into Algiers to sell them as prizes. Simultaneously, as this action between France and Britain took place, two cruisers, one from Algiers and one from Tunis, attacked the then unsupported Corsican vessels. Though it is possible they were working in conjunction with the French, the more likely scenario is that they saw an opportunity and took it.

The specifics are muddled—it is unclear whether the Barbary Coast vessels looked at the British passports, or whether they simply saw the Corsican flag and moved to attack. The report does clearly state that the Corsican vessels fired at the Algerian cruiser, killing some of the crew, leaving some question as to who actually was the aggressor. Regardless, the initial reports stated that two Corsican boats were sunk, five captured by the cruiser from Algiers, and two by the cruiser from Tunis. The Corsicans were then imprisoned.[76]

Thus, just below the surface of the conflict between France and Britain was a broiling mess of tensions that had been stirred up by the entrance of the British fleet into the Mediterranean, especially its decision to apparently stay in Corsica. There was no clear sense of precedence or rules to deal with a situation in which Corsican ships, flying Corsican flags, with British passports, and under constitutional protection from Britain were captured by a third-party state not at war with Britain but at war with Corsica; it was further complicated because of the interference of French ships with the British naval vessels protecting the Corsicans. Yet, despite the unfamiliarity and even lunacy of the situation, the British were forced to confront these issues.

Initially, Charles Mace was in charge of the negotiations to procure the release of the Corsicans. As had been the case throughout the war, the British government offered little in the way of tangible support, and with this lack of support, Mace promptly made a muddle of the situation. The demands of the Dey of Algiers for safe return of the Corsicans called for the expulsion of Portuguese men-of-war from Gibraltar and 60,000 pounds be paid to the Dey, as well as that in the future Corsican

[76] BNA HO/4/431, 4 September 1794; FO 3/7, Mace to Rainsford, 22 Aug. 1794.

vessels would use the British flag exclusively, not the Corsican flag. Mace found these demands unreasonable, but he was unable to negotiate without resorting to baseless threats of British naval intervention, similar to Hervey in Tuscany. Unlike the Grand Duke, however, the Dey of Algiers was not swayed, thus Mace was forced to flee in fear of his life.[77] In his place, Elliot sent Frederick North to negotiate the safe return of the captives and recognition of Corsica as British.[78]

In this case, all parties recognized that the British had little room to negotiate. North came in ready to accede to all of the demands, though with room to bargain on the actual amount to be paid; as well as to stipulate that while no Portuguese vessels would be permitted to leave out of Gibraltar for raids on the Barbary Coast, there would not be a general expulsion. To North's credit, he again was able to obtain a favorable result. The Dey was willing to accept Corsica as a dominion of Britain, and therefore to be at peace with the island. He also ransomed the prisoners for £40,000, significantly less than the sum of 60,000 that was initially requested—indeed, a relative bargain at the going rate of captive ransoms.[79] Moreover, the Dey of Algiers announced that Britain henceforth would be given "most favored nation" status and that, as a mark of their renewed friendship, the Dey would mediate between Tunis and Britain for the return of the captives held there. Although North failed to fully press the Dey into an aggressive stance against France, either in strictly military terms or by revoking any agreements held with France regarding the coral fishing grounds, he did obtain permission for British ships to confiscate grain carried by Algerian ships for the south of France, as long as the ships were compensated. This was seen as a crucial victory in the effort to starve out the French armies on the border of Italy.[80]

The British had achieved a workable relationship with Algiers, so they now turned to Tunis. North was not the negotiator in this case. Instead, Elliot began by using the Dey of Algiers as an intermediary. However, the Bey of Tunis saw the British agreement with Algiers as a capitulation and

[77] BNA FO 30/7, Mace to Elliot, 8 September 1795.

[78] BNA FO 20/7, Elliot to Portland, 3, 27 December 1795.

[79] For one of the best recent treatments of the overall relationship between European states and the Barbary Coast in terms of ransoms, see Gillian Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011). For the specific accounting of North's mission, see BNA FO 3/8, FO 20/9, and AO 1/8/2.

[80] BNA FO 20/9 North to Elliot, 3 January 1796, Elliot to Portland, 17 January; FO 20/11 Elliot to Portland, 28 June 1796.

demanded the same amount for his captives' release, despite the fact that there were far fewer of them. The Bey also seemed to mimic the Dey of Algiers in threatening war and feigning insults. Elliot's response to this was perhaps borne of frustration—he sent Admiral Waldegrave to engage in strong-arm diplomacy.

Here again it is possible to see a return to Hervey's strategy in 1793, though again it achieved limited success. Waldegrave had no authority to declare war or even act overly aggressively towards Tunis, and the British bluff was called. This time Elliot took advantage of the Corsican privateers, ordering that they seize all Tunisian vessels and property on neutral vessels. This measure proved effective, and in May of 1796 the Bey of Tunis agreed to an armistice that lasted six months.[81] The British would evacuate Corsica at the end of five months, so this situation was never fully resolved. In general, though, again the difficulties faced by the British as participants in the broader Mediterranean dynamic are evident, as well as the lack of a clear Counter-Revolutionary ideology informing their actions. Failing to provide an alternative to the chaos of the Revolution with any semblance of stability cleared the way for the French to sweep away the Coalition in the Mediterranean.

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Although Corsica created numerous problems externally for the British, the years from 1794 to 1796 also featured the gradual, but perhaps inevitable, crumbling of consensus within the island itself. What started as a grand experiment in what could loosely be called constitutional imperialism, with declarations of perpetual union and no alienation of sovereignty but maintenance of autonomy, ended with the British ignominiously vacating the island in late 1796. It is important to note that perhaps the chief factor in the decision to vacate was the fact that Corsica was an overextension strategically for the British. This was especially true given the difficulties with Spain occurring simultaneously as the Corsica situation deteriorated. Nonetheless, it is likely that even without the issues with Spain, the British would have been forced to vacate Corsica because of two key internal factors.

The first is the actions of the government itself. Put simply, the British were ill-equipped or prepared to govern the island. Disputes over religion were common between the British and Corsicans, as were strong

[81] BNA FO 20/7, Elliot to Portland, 24 May 1795; FO 20/9 Elliot to Portland 20 March 1796; FO 20/10, 29 March 1796; FO 20/10, 14 May 1796.

reactions from the Corsicans against the British determining whom they could and could not attack—suggestions to which they rarely listened. The separation of domestic and imperial policy failed. Crucially, the British were unable to collect taxes. The island essentially had been untaxed since the early years of the French Revolution, and when the Corsican government attempted to allot and collect taxes, many villages put up heavy resistance that Elliot, as Vice-Roy, responded to with military force. When the Constitution placed the control of the military in the hands of the Vice-Roy, the implication was that he would use it for defense of the island, not against Corsicans themselves. The fact that the taxes were issued by the Corsican Parliament, peopled entirely by Corsicans, mattered little to the villages in the mountains, only that a British Vice-Roy enforced their collection. One of the first armed revolts on the island in 1795 was over this issue.[82]

Another revolt started over a seemingly trifle issue. At a government function in Bastia, a British soldier may or may not have insulted and broken a plaster bust of Pasquale Paoli. The father of the Corsican nation had been constantly undermining British authority and at times vaguely threatened to set up an alternative government. The growing tension between Paoli and the British caused more than a few riots and disturbances and at that time the issue of the bust threatened to cause a full civil war. [83] After putting down the disturbances, Elliot resolved to effectively exile Paoli as the cause of this angst. This was necessary in the long term to solidify British authority on the island, but in the immediate aftermath of his exile, the anti-British feelings grew. The bust incident and exile were confirmation to many that the British had conspired against the *baba* of the Corsican people. After this period, the threat of civil war never fully receded, and there were large swathes of Corsica where the British were not welcome.[84]

The second, and related, issue is the unwillingness of the Corsicans to be governed by an outside power. The Anglo-Corsican Kingdom ideally circumvented this issue by opening the government, especially the legislature, to Corsicans. Nevertheless, in practice the most important and influential positions all were appointed by the Vice-Roy, who in turn was appointed by the King. Though Gilbert Elliot did not entirely neglect

[82] RMM ELL/145, Wauchoupe to Trigge, 30 Oct. 1795.
[83] BNA FO 20/9, Elliot to Portland, 17 Nov. 1795.
[84] RMM ELL/123, North to Elliot, 25 May 1796.

placing Corsicans in his Council, many of the highest-level positions were still virtually inaccessible to the natives of the island. The British may have been pleased with the exceptional amount of liberty granted to their Corsican subjects, but to many Corsicans, outsiders were still essentially governing them.

They were left asking: What is the substantive difference between Genoese, French, and British occupation? To be fair to the British, Corsica was likely too fractured to succeed with anything resembling self-rule. If a member of one family or clan had been elected, another would have been dissatisfied, vendettas would have been declared, and the government of the island thrown into disarray.[85] Given the strategic importance of the island for the British, and the growing confidence of the French in the Mediterranean arena, this would have been unacceptable. However, for the Corsicans the British simply served as a continuation of a long string of oppressors and were equally unacceptable.[86]

Whether the British could have resolved the internal tensions is difficult to assess. It would have been a challenge and required a much heavier hand than Gilbert Elliot seemed capable of exerting. While he did use the military as a domestic peacekeeping force, he was quick to announce that all was well without actually resolving any of the discontent on the island. This delaying strategy had some value because the larger Mediterranean situation continually drained both time and resources away from Elliot's ability to act as head of the government. Had the British position in the Mediterranean remained relatively strong or even improved by maintenance of the alliance with Spain and the strengthening of the ties between the Italian powers, it seems unlikely that the British would have willingly abandoned such a strong strategic point in the Mediterranean. Elliot then would have been able to better resolve the tensions on the island.

Counterfactuals aside, however, by August of 1796 it was clear that the British had no other option than to abandon the island. They and their

[85] Tangential evidence of this is found today, as Corsica is currently split into two separate Departments (2A and 2B).

[86] It is worth noting that there was an undercurrent of Republicanism that associated itself explicitly with the French Revolution in opposition to the British. In the Balagne region of Corsica, acts of the Parliament were burned along with the houses of prominent citizens, all to the cry of "*viva la reppublica francese*!" This was not a widespread or uniform trend, but it did exist. RMM ELL/123, North to Elliot, 17 April and 1, 7 May 1796.

assets were evacuated in October, first to Elba and then to Gibraltar.[87] In flagrant violation of the Corsican Constitution, there was a brief attempt to sell the island to Catherine the Great of Russia in an effort to keep it out of French possession, but before the deal could develop, Catherine died and the French retook the island.

The root cause of the British weakness in the Western Mediterranean was their inconsistency. In Corsica, they attempted to balance strategic and political goals, ultimately failing to utilize Corsica to its full strategic value and failing to demonstrate themselves as a viable alternative to the French on a political or diplomatic level. In the Italian states, the British similarly found themselves unable to mediate between the various minor powers, and unable to either adequately offer protection or sufficiently demonstrate the consequences of recalcitrance. In North Africa as well, the British Navy was stretched too thin to impress its will on the minor powers, forcing the British to rely on diplomacy with limited bargaining power. In all of these cases the French were quick to take advantage by offering either a solid diplomatic alternative or a convincing display of military power. By offering neither, the British in the struggle for the Western Mediterranean ultimately went away defeated.

The evacuation of Corsica was tantamount to the British withdrawing nearly entirely from the Mediterranean. There was a brief attempt in December of 1796 to countermand the withdrawal order, but it was too late. Even though they maintained a small naval presence and would reenter in force by 1798, their initial foray into Mediterranean state-building in the Revolutionary Era was over. The experiment of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom had failed, and with it, or perhaps because of it, British influence in the region evaporated. On the surface, the rapid deterioration of British authority between 1794 and 1796 seems exceptional and almost without cause. There were French military victories on land surrounding the Mediterranean; however, the most striking of these would come in 1796, by which time the British were already having serious difficulties. There is an element of causation in the French military victories, but ultimately they lack substantive explanatory power.

Scratching beneath the surface reveals the inherent fragility of the British position in the Mediterranean, primarily because of ambiguity within their

[87] The original evacuation order can be found in BNA ADM 2/135 Admiralty to Jervis, 31 Aug. 1796. A good account of the evacuation itself is found in Gregory, *Ungovernable Rock*, Chap. 11.

global imperial vision, but especially relating to the Mediterranean and Corsica, as well as difficulties within the First Coalition. The victories of the French Army only further weakened an already tenuous grip. These French victories were, at least in part, made possible by the inconsistencies of the British strategy and aims for the Mediterranean. Although just as the French military victories lack explanatory power for the British failures, so too do the British failures lack explanatory power for the French victories. Ultimately, the two are linked not only with each other but also with the larger political, military, and diplomatic dynamics of the Western Mediterranean.

CHAPTER 6

The French Attack on Neutrality, 1794–1796

In the previous chapter, the focus was on the pressures created by the British in the Western Mediterranean between 1794 and 1796. The coming of the French Revolution and the creation of the First Coalition created the opportunity for the British to explore different and varied approaches to diplomacy and statecraft at the interstices of Revolution and Counter-Revolution, but the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom ultimately failed to provide a viable alternative to either the traditional balance of power or the French Revolution. From Corsica, the British alienated their allies, failed to make significant strides against the façade of neutrality, and opened the possibility for the other Western Mediterranean powers to reconcile or even ally with France. Britain could offer neither a compelling incentive to maintain the Coalition, nor exert an adequate amount of force to dissuade allied or neutral powers from showing preference to France. By establishing themselves in Corsica, the British lost the ability to integrate the Mediterranean into their broader imperial vision for a post-Revolutionary world.

This chapter follows a similar, if opposed, narrative by tracing the development and practice of French Mediterranean foreign policy during the same period. For the French Revolutionaries, there was a similar tension between their diplomatic and military presence, and a similar struggle to navigate the borderlands of the Western Mediterranean political structure. As seen in the third chapter, the question from 1789 to 1793 was how to combine radical Revolutionary rhetoric with practical diplomatic practice,

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and this stayed true from 1794 to 1796. Critically, however, the reactions of the British and the First Coalition to the early radicalization of the Revolution provided France with the ability to address the tension at the heart of its international relations. While the British transitioned from the defenders of international order to a force for destabilization, the French transitioned from a radical destabilizing foreign policy to acting in defense of the balance of power in the Mediterranean.[1] Instead of subverting sovereignty as they had done in 1793, or splitting sovereignty as the British did in Corsica from 1794 to 1796, the French began to integrate and manipulate the Old Regime conception of the state into a version compatible with the centralizing goals and wishes of the Revolution.

For the French, their early hopes of radicalizing the Mediterranean, especially the Italian states, were stymied by the First Coalition but also by the general reaction against radicalization in the Italian states and in Corsica.[2] Without a preponderance of force to back up the Revolutionary diplomacy, the centralizing impulse in 1793 only served to push the governments of several of the Italian states towards an alliance with the British and the overall formation of the First Coalition in the Mediterranean—in the case of Corsica, the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom. Nevertheless, over the course of these several years, Revolutionary diplomacy proved surprisingly adaptable, and with force to assist it, surprisingly appealing. After Thermidor and leading up to the Directory, there was still radical rhetoric at play, but the actual goals of the French statesmen in the Western Mediterranean was not strict radicalization, but a consolidation of gains and the expulsion of the British.[3] No longer in a vacuum, the French

[1] This transition is noted in Paul Schroeder's *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[2] The reactions by the Italian states is noted in various works, such as John Davis's *Naples and Napoleon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Michael Broers, *Napoleonic Imperialism and the Savoyard Monarchy 1773–1821: State Building in Piedmont* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997); Greg Hanlon, *Early Modern Italy, 1550–1800: Three Seasons in European History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); Richard Long, "The Relations of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany with Revolutionary France, 1790–1799," Florida State University Dissertation, 1972. For Corsica, see J.M.P. McErlean, *Napoleon and Pozzo Di Borgo in Corsica and After, 1764–1821: Not Quite a Vendetta* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996); Antoine Casanova, *Peuple Corse, Révolutions et Nation Française* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1979); and Antoine Casanova, *La Révolution Française en Corse (1789–1800)* (Toulouse: Privat, 1989).

[3] The best work regarding this is that of Virginie Martin, "In Search of the 'Glorious Peace'? Republican Diplomats at War, 1792–1799," in *Republics at War, 1776–1840:*

proceeded to create a workable vision for the state in conjunction with the other European powers.

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The primary goal for the French between 1794 and 1796 was expanding their influence in the Italian states. Preventing this, of course, also was one of the main goals of the British and the First Coalition. The primary line of defense and primary obstacle for the French from a military perspective was the persistence of the Piedmontese. The House of Savoy had been fighting France since August of 1792, and though Nice and Savoy had quickly fallen, the Army had mostly resisted attempts by the French to gain the Alpine passes of the provinces of Saluzzo and Cuneo. This was in part because of some unexpected stalwartness from the Piedmontese forces, even though this did little to improve the opinions of the other Coalition members on their commitment.[4] This lack of commitment to the Coalition from the Piedmontese also frustrated Gilbert Elliot's attempts in 1794 to form an Italian League. He rightly assumed that Turin and Milan would need to be an integral part of any movement, but neither were proactive in providing assistance that might equal gain to the other. Although they were part of the Coalition through their alliances with Britain, Austria and Piedmont spent more time planning for the malfeasance of the other than directing their efforts against the French.

From the French perspective, the Piedmontese were strategically suited to frustrate any straightforward attempts to break their line of defense through the Alps, necessitating a push along the Riviera. Here it was necessary to count on the preferential neutrality of Genoa. If the Coalition had managed to pressure Genoa more effectively from Toulon, the situation might have evolved in a different way. As it was, however, Carnot offered a proposition for the new campaign season on January 30, 1794, that was in large part predicated on the Genoese acting essentially as allies rather than as neutrals.[5] The Piedmontese in turn were aware of the necessity for the French to go along the Riviera to assault them, and the Sardinian General Dellara requested permission to occupy Briga, a town northwest of Oneglia and slightly northeast of Saorgio—both were

Revolutions, Conflicts, and Geopolitics in Europe and the Atlantic World, ed. Pierre Serna (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[4] Martin Boycott Brown, *The Road to Rivoli: Napoleon's First Campaign* (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2001), Ch. 3.

[5] Quoted in Bergadini, R., *Vittorio Amadeo III (1726–1796)*. (Turin, 1939), 249–50.

essential to the defensive line. Highlighting the difficulties within this corner of the Coalition, the Austrian commander of the joint forces, General De Vins, refused to authorize this move because it would put Austrian troops defending non-Austrian territory. He eventually did agree to shift 4000 troops to protect Oneglia, however; this move spurred the French into action. The French, led by General Pierre Jadart Dumerbion, initially had preferred an invasion by sea to avoid upsetting Genoese neutrality, but with the Austrian troop movements and the blockade of Genoa by Nelson and the British fleet, he was persuaded to begin an invasion by land. This expedition began on April 6.

Dumerbion himself was too elderly to take personal command, and indeed seemed more than willing to acquiesce to the plans proposed by the newly promoted General of Brigade, Napoleon Buonaparte. Fresh from his victory at Toulon, Napoleon was part of the column to move on Oneglia, as well as several other key players in the Revolutionary Mediterranean—Saliceti and Augustin Robespierre, Maximillian's younger brother. These two were the Representatives on Mission to the Army of Italy, along with Ricord. The move into Genoese territory went smoothly, as the commander of the Genoese frontier garrison at Ventimiglia could only protest slightly with words at this breach of neutrality. The Genoese were neither willing nor able to break their stance of prefential neutrality for France, given that an an entire French column was marching through their territory. Much to the frustration of the Coalition, the French calculation of Genoa's stance proved accurate. Oneglia fell on April 9.

Without belaboring the operational aspects of the remainder of this campaign, a few salient points are worth mentioning. The result of it was that by the end of April, the Piedmontese were fully forced from the county of Nice, and their defensive line from Oneglia to Saorgio was now entirely in French hands. This had an immediate effect on Austria and Piedmont. On the one hand, their differences remained. On April 25, Thugut said of the Court of Turin, "as always, I only have a very slender idea of their good faith." Likewise, Colonel Costa wrote to his brother, saying:

> You have no idea of the consternation that reigns here … the remarks are detestable, but a unanimous curse against M. De Vins. As for me, I judge him incorrigible, because what happens is wanted, not owing to stupidity. Whatever the Austrians promise, we only have treason and bad faith to expect from them.[6]

[6] Quoted in Bergadini, R., *Vittorio Amadeo III (1726–1796)* (Turin, 1939).

This was not mere chatter. On April 30, in dire need of reinforcements, the Piedmontese were not offered a single man by the Austrians; instead, they again defended their own positions and allowed the forces of the Piedmontese to be pushed as far back as the fortress of Cuneo.

On the other hand, despite their differences, the advances of the French also impressed on the two nations the necessity of working together. They officially signed a treaty of alliance on May 29 in which Austria promised to prevent the French advance along the Riviera and the Piedmontese agreed to defend the mountain passes. The treaty confirmed General de Vins as the commander-in-chief of the two armies, though he was technically still subordinate to the monarchs of the respective armies. This was not an ideal situation for either the Piedmontese or the Austrians, but the possibility of the French pressing onward forced this alliance on them.

Besides, the possibility of the French moving further into Italy was very real. Napoleon certainly favored this, even developing a detailed plan and proposing it to the Committee of Public Safety. There was some consideration of his plan through May and June, further rising Napoleon's star; however, his fortunes were suddenly reversed when Robespierre and his supporters were overthrown on July 27. Although not intimately linked with Robespierre, Bonaparte did owe much of his current position to his influence. Saliceti, likely in an attempt to divert any attention from him, associated the plan to continue the invasion of Italy as being "of Robespierre *jeune* and Ricord, proposed by Bonaparte." Bonaparte was arrested, and Carnot ordered a defensive arrangement along the Italian border. Schérer replaced Dumerbion, and the veteran of the Seven Years War took a much more plodding, slow strategy. He ostensibly was waiting for reinforcements, but in reality the Army of Italy was losing strength rapidly as a result of outbreaks of typhus and other diseases. This stagnation and depletion of forces and morale would remain the status quo until Napoleon took over in 1796.[7]

The decision to remain defensive certainly had its roots in Paris and in Thermidorean politics, but on a more practical level for the Western Mediterranean, it precipitated the shift away from a policy of radicalization. Had the French armies continued pushing in 1794, it would have shown to the Coalition the necessity of remaining together and quite possibly served to push the neutral Italian states into the Italian League that Elliot was busy proposing; it certainly did push the bickering Austria and

[7] See Brown, *The Road to Rivoli,* especially Chap. 4.

Piedmont together. By taking a defensive stance, there remained the possibility of diplomacy and negotiation, and it put to the test the British narrative of French aggression upsetting the balance of power that was essential to maintaining the Coalition. This was not necessarily an intended consequence of the Carnot and Schérer inaction, but it nonetheless set the stage for a reversal of roles by France and Britain over the next two years.

Although the Italian front may have stalled in late 1794 in terms of military action, diplomatically there was a great deal of maneuvering. Contrasted to the Sardinian expedition of 18 months before, this defensive posture recognized the limits of radical foreign policy. Instead of pushing for conquest and radicalization, bringing the smaller powers directly into the orbit of the French Revolution, the French now began to accept the peripheral status of various Mediterranean powers. Though there were the beginnings of cultural imperialism, on a political level the radical efforts of the early Revolutionary diplomats were replaced by a more practical perspective that allowed and even encouraged neutrality, or at least the phantom of it.

For Piedmont, it took until the end of 1794; however, secret negotiations with France began to take place through intermediaries in Switzerland. The economic situation was bad enough that the King had to pawn the crown jewels, placing them with Dutch bankers. British subsidies were rare, and not nearly enough to stem the tide of debt accrued by several years of continued warfare. The lack of immediate pressure by the French opened the door for these negotiations, though they actually accomplished very little. One salient point, however, is that when Austria opened peace talks the next year, again covertly, France proposed the cession of Lombardy to Piedmont in exchange for Austria taking Bavaria and France taking Nice and Savoy. The Austrians rejected this proposal, but even while still at war, French diplomatic goals were now more geared towards a balance of power dynamic with France an equal player at the diplomatic table. The First Coalition was fracturing because France had ceased to be the same political or ideological threat in terms of stability, and now in fact seemed to offer more stability than the nearest alternative, the British.[8]

Even though the Piedmontese began negotiations, they remained at war with France and persisted in protecting their tenuous line, keeping

[8] See Michael Broers, *Napoleonic Imperialism and the Savoyard Monarchy 1773–1821: State Building in Piedmont* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997).

the French from having full access to Italy. This is not entirely surprising within the Mediterranean context, as Piedmont was tied more to the Continent and Austria than to the peripheral zone of the Mediterranean. Beyond this line and away from direct conflict, Genoa and Tuscany were less determined in their resistance to the French now that the pressure to join the radical Revolution had subsided. The Genoese still had financial ties to the French, so their status on the periphery was always contingent on the whims of France. In the previous chapter, we saw the British recognize this fact and only seek to prevent the Genoese from outright declaring an alliance with the French.

For the most part this was a success, though when the French wanted to move troops to attack Piedmont in 1794, they did not so much as ask permission. Later, in 1796, the Genoese would find the eyes of the French more squarely set on their claims of neutrality, but in 1794 and 1795 neither France nor Britain pushed Genoa into the arms of the other. In this sense, aside from the *Modeste* incident in 1793 and the subsequent brief blockade, Genoa was rarely a site for the creation of new political forms of interaction through British and French competition. Genoa was a borderland, but not one that Britain seriously contested.

The situation in Tuscany had significantly more factors at play. The Genoese were more or less cowed by the French, while the other Italian powers (e.g., Naples, Piedmont, or the Papal States) were all clearly aligned against the French. Tuscany exists as a fascinating study of the struggle between both the French and the British, as well as the Tuscan struggle to maintain neutrality. On a geographic level, Tuscany was better situated in this push for neutrality, with the Genoese and Piedmontese acting as a buffer between the Tuscan lands and the Army of Italy. Realistically, of course, this would not have dissuaded an active invasion of Tuscany, but the question then became: Where would they go from there?

Pushing over into Lombardy or down into Rome and Naples was certainly desirable; however, this was a long and protracted campaign. It could not feasibly be embarked on until the Austrian threat to the north of Italy was sufficiently dealt with, and the British at least partially neutralized in the Western Mediterranean. Allied with Tuscany, the British could pose a serious threat to any Italian operations. The Austrians also provided a degree of security to the Grand Duchy because of their dynastic relationship with Tuscany. Again, in practice, this was virtually a nonissue because Tuscany had been acting more and more independently of Austria even as the Revolutionary Wars progressed. Nonetheless, the connection was a

factor in preventing the French from exerting a decisive amount of influence over the Grand Duke in Florence.

Although these considerations were important to the French in 1794, the British were quick to brush them aside. In fact, they only served to make Tuscany even more appealing for intervention. The nominal ties with Austria, a British ally, seemed to offer a natural predilection towards the Coalition. Likewise, the susceptibility of the port of Livorno to naval influence meant that Britain was able to bring force to bear much more easily, either for protection or coercion. Finally, the British rightly recognized Tuscany's status as a gateway to the south of Italy and their Neapolitan allies, thus making it an area of extreme interest. This manifested in the reluctant alliance of October 1793, courtesy of Hervey's heavy-handed diplomacy. While the Coalition held Toulon and France was in upheaval, this seemed a relatively prudent course of action. When the British evacuated Toulon and sought succor in Livorno, however, the Grand Duke made no secret of the fact that Tuscany was at best an unwilling member of the Coalition.

By February 8, 1794, less than four months from the start of their alliance with Britain, the Tuscan government sent word to their ambassador in Paris that they desired a renewal of relations with France as soon as possible.[9] While this communication made its way to Paris, the Major Domo of Tuscany, Marquis Frederigo Manfredini, communicated to François Cacault through a third party the desire to return to neutrality. Cacault was the successor to La Flotte and had remained in Tuscany as an unofficial French agent following the end of neutrality.[10] Although the French would have preferred a closer relationship than neutrality, Cacault recognized the factors discussed earlier, especially the link between Tuscany and Austria. When, on February 26, the Grand Duke committed to writing his wish to reclaim neutrality, Cacault urged the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deforgues, to accept.[11] Later, when emphasizing the importance of Tuscany, Cacault specifically noted the commercial value of Livorno for French interests in the Mediterranean, and the strategic placement of Porto Ferraio, noting that it was "a stepping stone to Corsica and the

[9] *Archives Nationales de France* (hereafter cited as AN) AFIII/87 "*Memoire sur la Conduit de la Toscane avec le Republique de France* (n.d., likely 1795).

[10] *Ministre Affaire Etrangers* (hereafter MAE), CP 146, Cacault to Deforgues, 20 February 1794, Corsini to Cacault, 26 February 1794.

[11] MAE CP 146, Corsini to Cacault, 26 February 1794.

Papal States." The thoughts towards expansion, especially reclamation of Corsica, had not disappeared, but now they were tempered by the benefits of a neutral Tuscany on the periphery of the broader European dynamic.[12]

The French willingness to accept neutrality was bolstered by evidence to support the assumption that this neutrality would be in a similar vein as that of Genoa. The Tuscans had shown nothing but recalcitrance in their dealings with the Coalition, leading Cacault to note that they had earned the bad feelings of both Britain and Spain.[13] These feelings were only exacerbated by the expectation from Britain that Tuscany would assist the 5000 refugees from Toulon. The Grand Duke refused to permit their landing at Livorno, instead sending them to Porto Ferraio, and even then only a limited number of them. That number was soon exceeded, and the Spanish made matters worse by landing two ships of refugees at Livorno after being expressly forbidden to do so by the governor of the port.[14]

The Corsican corsairs also created ill-will between Tuscany and Britain. Even though Tuscany had no claim on the island to spur conflict, the Corsicans were indiscriminate in their attacks on vessels in the Ligurian and Tyrrhenian Seas. Nominally, they were tasked with disrupting the grain trade to France, but the lack of British control over their Corsican subjects blurred the lines between privateering and pirateering.[15] Within Italy, the relationship between Tuscany and Rome became tense over suspicions of Jansenism, further eroding any semblance of cooperation against the French. In February, Tuscany refused to send any troops to assist Piedmont against the French invasion. It was these issues that created the cold reception Gilbert Elliot experienced when he sought Tuscan assistance in forming an Italian League in April and May of 1794.

Tuscany was not only ill at ease as a member of the Coalition against France but also were quite receptive, at least according to Cacault, to French ideals. In Florence, many radical French newspapers circulated freely. In addition, the *Gazzetta Universal*e, the official government publication, was known to relate the events in France with a reasonable amount of objectivity, at least according to the French. This was not necessarily as strong a link as the Genoese, with their financial ties with France,

[12] MAE Mémoires et documents, XII, *Italie: Dépêches et Mémoires, 1794–1809,* "*Observations sur la Neutralité des Puissances d'Italie*, 1794."

[13] AN AFIII/87, *Mémoire sur la Conduit de la Toscane avec le République de France*, 21 April 1794.

[14] British National Archives (hereafter BNA) FO 20/2, FO 79/10 and HO 528/15.

[15] BNA FO 79/10, Serristori to Wyndham, 26 April 1794.

but it was a start. Both Cacault and Manfredini saw in these ideological ties the roots of a mutually beneficial financial relationship. This view was further bolstered when there was some suspicion regarding counterfeit *assignats* being passed in Tuscany, and the Tuscan officials cracked down with aplomb.[16]

Cacault did not inflame pro-Revolutionary sentiment or push for acceptance of radical doctrines. Rather, he carefully and purposefully allowed Tuscany to distance itself from the Coalition without forcing it to make a decisive stand either for or against the Revolution. Compared to the aggressive actions of Hervey and Hood the previous year, Manfredini gladly took the opportunity to retreat towards neutrality. This need to resume neutrality became even more pressing with the French victories in the north against Piedmont. If the Piedmontese were unable to stop the French advance, even with the assistance of the Austrians, what hope did Tuscany have? The naval support offered by the alliance with the British could only offset the French strength slightly, and even then, much of that support was engaged in Corsica or elsewhere in the Mediterranean. Although the Tuscans also were aware of the easy and almost thoughtless violation of Genoese neutrality at Ventimiglia, even this would be preferred to an outright invasion.

Therefore, throughout May and June of 1794, the Tuscans began to carry out negotiations with France. William Wyndham, the new British Minister in Tuscany, became aware of this and sought unsuccessfully to have Cacault removed from the country. He wrote, "the Government, through this channel [Cacault], carries on a secret and dangerous correspondence with France … if not sent out, will be the means of destruction and subversion of Tuscany and perhaps all of Italy."[17] Wyndham specifically identified Francesco Carletti as one of the chief Tuscan intermediaries between Cacault and Manfredini. At a party in May, Wyndham drunkenly accosted and insulted Carletti. Despite being 64 years old and nearly blind, Carletti demanded a duel. Carletti fired well wide of Wyndham, and Wyndham discharged his pistol in the air, chivalrously settling the matter.[18]

[16] AN, AFIII/87, Cacault to the Committee of Public Safety, 23 November 1794).

[17] BNA FO 79/11, Wyndham to Grenville, 27 June 1794.

[18] Antonio Zobi, *Storia Civile Della Toscana* (Florence, 1850) III, 128–130; Conti, *La Toscana e la Rivoluzione francese*, 277–278.

In truth, Wyndham's accusations were accurate: Carletti had been an intermediary between Cacault and Manfredini. This incident actually bolstered his credibility in the eyes of the French, and he became the primary negotiator. He and Cacault carried out most of the negotiations in Genoa, away from the suspicious eyes of Wyndham.[19] There were some initial hurdles to overcome such as some hesitancy in Paris to even accept an alliance with Tuscany. Even though Corsini, the Secretary of the Council of State, elucidated in great detail how Tuscany had been coerced into the alliance with Britain, the Committee of Public Safety was well aware of their current military strength in Italy, poised as they were to follow Bonaparte's plan to continue the offensive. Cacault, however, was effusive in his praise for Tuscany and maintained that it had never actually been at war with France. Instead, he argued that French vengeance should be saved for the rest of the Italian "hydra."[20] "Tuscany," he claimed, "is the most feeble link, but it is the first to detach itself from the chain of the Coalition."[21]

Although Cacault was successful in encouraging the Committee of Public Safety to engage earnestly in negotiations, the mediation itself was still fraught with difficulty. Tilly, the French Charge d'Affaires in Genoa where the negotiations were taking place, remained skeptical of Tuscan sincerity and stalled any serious discussions from taking place. From Carletti's perspective, "Tilly appears to be … a lunatic, a patriotic charlatan, but not a bad sort, not wicked."[22] Here again, the tension from the French diplomats between pursuing a more radical policy and engaging in traditional diplomacy becomes evident.

The negotiations with Tuscany took place at a crucial transition point, as the ripples from Thermidor made their way to Genoa and Tuscany. As Carnot and Schérer made the decision to pursue a more defensive stance against Piedmont and Bonaparte's plan was shelved, negotiations with Tuscany proceeded at a faster pace. Cacault's reversion to a more traditional strategy trumped Tilly's reluctance to allow Tuscany to regain neutrality. These two differing visions for Tuscany and the Mediterranean were tied to the events in Paris; however, they were also a function of the changing status of the French in the Mediterranean, distinct from the influences from Paris. Just as the British status shifted towards direct

[19] MAE CP 146, Pluviose III, "Notes sur la Toscane."
[20] AN, AFIII/87, Cacault to the Committee of Public Safety, 23 November 1794.
[21] Ibid., 6 Dec. 1794.
[22] Nuti, ed., "*Toscana e Francia*," Caletti to Corsini, 30 August 1794, 296.

control of the Mediterranean political and diplomatic process, the French shifted away from that very model towards indirect maintenance of the Mediterranean balance of power. This would change again with the Italian Campaign, but in 1794 Tuscany was the site of transitioning perspectives among diplomats concerning the role of the state in international relations.

On a more practical level, the delay in the negotiations surrounding the overthrow of the Committee of Public Safety led to concern on the part of Carletti. Specifically, he was worried that the negotiations would become widely known in Florence as a result of Tilly's lack of discretion. While Cacault preferred to operate in Tuscany via secret negotiations (another testament to the return to Old Regime diplomacy), Tilly was less discrete in his diplomatic proceedings. These fears were not unfounded, as a packet of letters from Genoa was given to an "imbecile" named Lenzi, who relayed the packet to Seratti, the Governor of Livorno and a known Anglophile.

Seratti was persuaded not to tell Wyndham; however, word was leaked to the Russian consul, who then told him.[23] Wyndham then almost repeated the mistakes of Hervey, aggressively posturing and demanding audiences with the Grand Duke and Manfredini. After he was rejected numerous times, he turned to Gilbert Elliot, a resource Hervey did not have in his time. Elliot counseled that the pressure must come from Vienna. Word went to London and from there to Vienna. No pressure came from the Emperor, however, and threatening to withdraw British protection seemed like exactly what the Tuscans wanted. Thus, Wyndham's hands were tied, and though he did not repeat Hervey's mistakes, nor did he find much more success.[24]

In Genoa, the negotiations between Carletti and Cacault were now free to proceed. Even without pressure from London, Vienna, and Paris, there was still much to discuss. A preponderance of the discussions concerned reparations owed to France from Tuscany's involvement in the disruption of the grain trade from Livorno. There was much dithering over the amount of grain Tuscany ultimately owed for the Grand Duchy's involvement in the confiscation of French grain, but finally Cacault was

[23] Ibid., Corsini to Carletti, 26 August, 1794; ibid., Carletti to Corsini, 21 August 1794.

[24] BNA, FO 79/11 Wyndham to Frenville, 25 Sept., 1794; ibid., Serristori to Wyndham, 22 Sept. 1794. and 22 Sept. 1794; ibid., Hood to Ferdinand III, 17 Sept. 1794; ibid., Elliot to Wyndham, 27 Sept.1794 and 3 Oct.1794; ibid., Grenville to Wyndham, Nov. 1794, and Brame to Wyndham, 16 Dec. 1794.

instructed to demand 50,000 sacks. Tuscany was still experiencing a grain shortage, so they tried to arrange for a sum of money to be deposited in a Genoese bank, allowing the French to purchase the grain themselves. Still, the Committee of Public Safety demanded grain, not money; 50,000 sacks was well in excess of the amount the Tuscan government could access, so initially this proved to be a nearly insurmountable obstacle for the negotiations. A solution was found in the French wish to rebuild their Mediterranean fleet. They were well aware that the British were constantly exporting foodstuffs and material to Corsica and to the Mediterranean fleet in general from Livorno. To try to get ahead of this, Cacault agreed to accept an initial shipment of 12,000 sacks of grain, followed by another 3058 sacks of grain, 431 bales of hemp, and 968 casks of tar.[25]

With this issue resolved, France and Tuscany agreed to a treaty on February 9, 1795. The National Convention and Committee of Public Safety ratified it on March 2. On March 3, the Grade Duke made public this agreement to revoke "all acts of adhesion, consent, or acceptance to the armed coalition against the French Republic" and issued a proclamation that both France and Tuscany had agreed that the neutrality would be reestablished as it had been prior to October 1793.[26] The initial reaction to the news in both Paris and Florence was joyful. Carletti, appointed ambassador on March 3, addressed the National Convention on March 18 and was greeted with applause. He expressed his pleasure at being able to take part in the signing of the treaty and noted that enthusiasm for the return to neutrality pervaded Tuscany.[27]

Although this may have been a rhetorical attempt to satisfy the French, it also was accurate. The Army of Italy was still maintaining its defensive posture, but rumors of a French fleet coming out of Toulon had both Tuscan and British merchants in Livorno nervous. For the Tuscans the signing of the treaty meant that if such a fleet did exist, Livorno would not

[25] AN, AFIII/87, Villars to the Committee of Public Safety, 8 Dec. 1794; ibid, Corsini to Goupy, 9 Dec. 1794; ibid, Cacault to the Committee of Public Safety, 9 Dec. 1794; ibid, Bertellet to Cacaut, 8 Dec. 1794; ibid, Cacault to the Committee of Public Safety, 3 Dec. 1794 and 6 Jan. 1795. Corsini to Cacault, 6 Jan. 1795. MAE, CP 146bis, Commissioner of Exterior Relations to the Committee of Public Safety, 23 March 1795.

[26] AN, AFIII/87, "Convention," 9 February 1795, ratified 13 February 1795; ibid., Ferdinand to the National Convention, 2 March 1795. *Gazzetta Universal*, No. 18, 3 March 1795.

[27] MAE CP 146bis, "*Proces-verbal de la Convention national*, 28 Ventose III"; ibid, Commissioner of Exterior Relations to the Committee of Public Safety, 27 Ventose III.

be its destination. There was also an immediate benefit because the opening of trade with France resulted in merchants shipping a great deal more grain to Livorno to trade with France. The Tuscans assumed that France would try to build the same mutually beneficial commercial and financial relationship with Tuscany as they had with Genoa.[28]

The news of the treaty did not have the same positive connotations for the British. Serristori explained to Wyndham that it was necessary to secure the safety of Tuscany, which also served the purpose of keeping the port open to the British. After all, the French taking of Livorno meant that the British would be forced out, while neutrality still allowed Admiral Hotham and Elliot to make liberal use of the free port to supply the fleet and Corsica. While this no doubt stung, Hotham was well aware of the reality and necessity of Livorno remaining open, and thus was forced to simply accept neutrality. He and Wyndham dearly hoped that this neutrality would be impartial, but knew that regardless they could do nothing but act "upon terms of amity."[29]

Tuscany became the first of several states to make peace with Revolutionary France in 1795, proving Cacault's "feeblest link" assessment accurate. Francois de Barthelemy echoed Cacault's successes in Tuscany by concluding treaties with Holland, Prussia, and Spain. Although these other treaties often overshadow the treaty with Tuscany in terms of scale and importance for Europe, the primacy of the Tuscan treaty shows the Mediterranean to be at the vanguard of changes occurring in the practice of international politics.

The treaty was a result of Tuscany wanting to remain at the periphery of the European political system, and France ultimately deciding to facilitate that desire. This treaty also is significant in the participation of the British in making the treaty possible. By pulling Tuscany in from the periphery to become part of the Coalition, the British created the space for the French to rebrand themselves after Thermidor. Much of the diplomatic maneuvering of this period was predicated on the assumption that France was

[28] Richard Long, "The Relations of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany with Revolutionary France, 1790–1799," 135, fn 44. Also, see Wyndham to Grenville, 3 March 1795, concerning concern over grain prices, and ANF, AFIII, 87, Cacault to the Committee of Public Safety, 10 March 1795 and Miot to the Committee of Public Safety, 21 Priarial III, 9 June 1795. By Miot's letter in June, so much grain had been imported that the Tuscan warehouses were completely full and overflow was being sent to Pisa.

[29] NA FO 79/12, Serristori, to Wyndham, 28 February 1795 and Wyndham to Grenville, 3 March 1795; ibid, Hotham to Wyndham, 2 March 1795.

expansionist and dangerous to the stability of Europe; however, from the perspective of Tuscany in 1794 and 1795, it was France that offered the return to the status quo of neutrality.

Even though the possibility for a return to the status quo existed in 1794, in the end the French relationship with the Mediterranean would take a different turn, combining the practices of the Revolutionary diplomats with the goals of the Old Regime. This process left Tuscany's hopes unfulfilled. Opening trade with France was supposed to bring commercial prosperity, but this did not materialize. The French preferred to rely on their already established connections in Genoa rather than develop a new infrastructure in Tuscany.[30] Perhaps more telling of the direction French participation in international relations would take, Cacault was not appointed as Minister to the Grand Duke. Cacault seemed a natural choice, given his familiarity with the Court and his dedicated work to achieve French aims there. Indeed, he protested as much several times. Much to his chagrin, however, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs passed him over in favor of Andre-Francois Miot.

Even though Miot had no more diplomatic experience than Cacault, in 1795 he had something of more value—a reputation as a dedicated Thermidorean. His fervor for the Revolution may have been of a slightly different essence than some of his predecessors in Italy, such as Basseville, but his appointment still represented a clear message from France that there were certain requirements that must be met to ensure that the eye of the Army of Italy remained elsewhere.[31] Although this was a different sort of international relationship than had been practiced in 1792 and 1793, it was not a wholesale rejection of the more radical tactics as much as it was a refinement and, in many ways, a stablization.

Miot's tenure as Minister Plenipotentiary was fraught with issues from the beginning. His credentials were presented in an unsealed envelope, which was a major breach of diplomatic protocol. The Grand Duke decided not to press this issue with their new French friends, but this effort at amicability proved a futile gesture. Miot lost no time in using a dispute between an *émigré* and some French prisoners of war to demonstrate exactly what

[30] AN, AF/III 87, Miot to the Committee of Public Safety, 3, 9 June 1795.

[31] On Miot, see Andre-Francois Miot comte de Melito, *Memoirs of Count Miot de Meliton, Minister, Ambassador, Councillor of State and Member of the Insittutde of France between the Years of 1788 and 1815*, ed. General Fleischmann, trans. by John Lillie and Mrs. Cashel Hoey (New York, 1881).

to expect from the reopening of relations with France. On May 24 several French prisoners of war, who had been released into Livorno by the British on their "word of honor," insulted and assaulted a French émigré. The émigré fled to a café where several compatriots reinforced him. Outnumbered, the French Republicans produced sabers and pistols and engaged in a general melee. The ensuing fracas resulted in several Tuscan injuries, including one death. After investigation, the consensus from the Tuscan perspective was that the French prisoners were to blame, especially because they were carrying weapons—a practice generally forbidden in Livorno, but especially for prisoners of war.[32] Miot, however, saw this as the fault of the Tuscan officials who were predisposed towards the British and the émigrés. In response to the incident therefore, he called for a general expulsion of French émigrés.[33]

The Grand Duke clearly could not agree to this given his explicit return to neutrality, which led to more accusations of Tuscan partiality from Miot. Issues regarding the French Republicans wearing the Revolutionary cockade further exacerbated this tense situation. While technically legal for the French Republicans, it did serve to antagonize the British, émigrés, Neapolitans, and more. This resulted in several cases where French Republicans were attacked without provocations. In most of these cases the aggressors were caught and prosecuted, but it was further grist for Miot's suspicions of Tuscany.

Carletti, while in Paris, also was responsible for the worsening relations between the two nations. He was initially well received and did an admirable job of promoting Tuscan interests there, but in late 1795 he became infatuated with Louis XVI's imprisoned daughter. This eventually led to his recall and became a matter of much discussion in French newspapers. Though settled satisfactorily by both French and Tuscan standards, it nonetheless proved the inability of Tuscany to remain out of the eyes of the French Revolutionaries.[34] Although the French reopened relations with Tuscany by nominally granting them their place on the periphery, Tuscany was steadily drawn into the orbit of France and the Revolution.

[32] Richard Long, "The Relations of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany with Revolutionary France, 1790–1799," 144, fn 3.

[33] MAE CP 146bis, Miot to Serristori, 30 May 1795. AN AF/III, 87, Miot to the Committee of Public Safety, 2 June 1795.

[34] AN AF/III 87; MAE CP 146–146bis.

Perhaps the most intriguing issue that arose between France and Tuscany was a heated discussion concerning the general concept of the "word of honor" required by the officials at Livorno for all ships leaving the port. This refers to a promise not to take prizes for 24 hours after leaving. There were several cases of the French ignoring this convention, but in September of 1795 the ship *L'Encourageante* refused to give the word of honor and subsequently was fired on by the Tuscan port authorities. Miot was livid at this and declared that he doubted the Tuscans would have fired on a British or Austrian vessel in a similar circumstance. The government in France protested vigorously against the law in general following this incident, claiming that it was far from impartial because 24 hours was sufficient to sail to Corsica or Savona but insufficient to reach any French ports.[35] Despite the protests, however, Tuscany did not rescind the law. By the end of 1795, Miot was fully convinced that the Tuscan neutrality was a sham.

Tuscany had only returned to neutrality for less than a year, but the result had proved less than what either party had hoped. Tuscany failed to escape the antagonism of the French Revolution, though they would perhaps be grateful for their status as a neutral power and not a belligerent in the coming year. Nevertheless, this proved that a neutrality, which earnestly attempted to not antagonize or alienate either the French or the British in the Mediterranean, was a futile dream. The French also were disappointed, however, because they had hoped to either make use of Tuscany in the struggle against Great Britain for control of the Western Mediterranean, or in negotiations with Austria. Tuscan neutrality failed to prove a factor for either goal, as Tuscany had little importance in negotiations with Austria, and the French still struggled to pressure Great Britain—even though this was more a product of their own inability to produce any sort of naval victory in the Mediterranean.

Although the Coalition may have suffered a setback with Tuscany's return to neutrality, the turmoil in Paris and the stagnation of the Army of Italy seemed to offer an opportunity to push the French out of the Riviera. In the summer of 1795, the Austro–Sardinians embarked on a campaign to reverse the losses of the previous year, subsidized by the British to the effect of £2 million more than what they already had given. The goal, according to Admiral Goodall, was not only to protect Italy but also to provide additional security for the British outside of their Corsican

[35] AN AF/II/88, Committee of Public Safety to Miot, 26 Sept. 1795.

stronghold.[36] Initially, the Austrian forces, led again by General de Vins, moved along the Genoese coast and pushed the French Army back to Loano, a port in the province of Savona.

The plan was to take advantage of British naval superiority from there, courtesy of a squadron commanded by Nelson and to prevent any sort of resupply of the Army of Italy from Genoa or Livorno. Deprived of food and supplies, the Army of Italy would not be able to oppose a further push by the Coalition to retake the Piedmontese territories. Unfortunately, this plan relied in part on de Vins continuing to put pressure on the Army of Italy, preventing Schérer from mounting a counterattack to reopen supply lines, and according to Francis Drake, the British representative to Genoa, de Vins was "very lukewarm." Indeed, De Vins proved reticent to risk his troops for the gain of Piedmont–Sardinia and settled in defensively at Loano.[37]

The French, meanwhile, were preparing to retaliate, but while the Coalition offensive may have stalled at Loano, the British fleet initially proved successful in preventing resupply from Genoa or Livorno. So long as the British maintained their blockade of the Ligurian Sea, it seemed that the stalemate would continue. This was especially clear to a young artillery officer idling in Paris—Napoleon Bonaparte. The Ministry of War called on him to propose a solution to the predicament of the Army of Italy. His plan was to restore the vital grain trade with Genoa by retaking the ports of Loano and Vado, driving the Piedmontese and Austrians fully from the surrounding area that they now dominated defensively. Napoleon's impressive and ambitious plan was in large part adopted and passed along to Schérer. Bonaparte clearly wanted a leadership role in this operation, but his strategic skills were valued highly enough that he was given a position in the Ministry of War, much to his chagrin.[38]

Perhaps more than any of his contemporaries, Napoleon understood from personal experience that the key to breaking the stalemate in the Italian theater and the Mediterranean was to break the influence of the British over the various Mediterranean powers. Taking Loano and Vado would undercut the ability of the British to pressure the Genoese and Tuscans, leaving them only Corsica as a base. Cutting British support

[36] BNA WO 1/687, Goodall to Hotham, 24 Feb. 1795.

[37] HMC *Dropmore*, 3:124–128; RMM ELL/125, Drake to Elliot, 11 Sept. 1795; FO 28/13, Drake to Grenville, 2 November 1795.

[38] Martin, *The Road to Rivoli*, 105.

in the Mediterranean would mean clear supply routes for the Army of Italy, which could then go on the offensive against the Austro–Sardinian forces, which in turn would cause problems for the British in Corsica. Yet, Tuscany still proved problematic. Tuscan neutrality was supposed to provide this weak link in the chain of the Coalition, but it failed to divert significant British attention or resources away from the struggle against France. The port of Livorno remained open to the British, and Schérer's ability to advance was stymied as a result. Just as the British were frustrated by the instability of the political allegiances of the Western Mediterranean, the French too were unable to settle the region. The first domino to fall in their favor came not in Italy but to the west in Spain.

As discussed in the previous chapters, the Spanish joined the Coalition against Revolutionary France primarily as a response to the execution of Louis XVI and the overt aggression of Revolutionary foreign policy. Similar to the situation with Tuscany, however, the match was not ideal. There was a great deal of support for the war in 1793 and 1794, but this was while Spain was enjoying victories over the French. The Spanish monarchy and Prime Minister Godoy had effectively mobilized the Spanish population against the French by warning them of the horrors and dangers of the French Revolution. This same fear worked against the Spanish when the French began to make progress on both sides of the Pyrenees, and there was a general desire to make peace with the Revolution.[39]

The French victories certainly were a causal factor motivating this wish for peace, but it also had its roots in the fact that the British were proving more threatening and destabilizing in many regards than the French. In early 1794, with Robespierre calling for a "Catalonian Republic," Spain had little choice but to remain with the Coalition, despite the growing tension between the Court at Madrid and the Court at London. The Anglo-Corsican Kingdom was not quite as belligerent as the full-scale invasion of the French, but it did create serious questions concerning the linking of Spanish and British interests.

With Thermidor, the door opened for Spain to declare that its war aims—regime change in France—had been achieved. This also was aided

[39] Pedro Rujula, "International War, National War, Civil War: Spain and Counter Revolution (1793–1840)" in *Republics at War, 1776–1840: Revolutions, Conflicts, and Geopolitics in Europe and the Atlantic World*, ed. Pierre Serna (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Douglas Hilt, *The Troubled Trinity: Godoy and the Spanish Monarchs* (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1987).

by the fact that a key obstacle in the peace negotiations, which had begun in 1794, was the fate of the Dauphin and his sister. Spain would not agree to any peace while they remained in captivity, but the French were equally inflexible on this point. For better or for worse, this issue was resolved with the death of the young Capet on June 8, 1795. Of course, claiming the Thermidorean Regime as the preferred goal was a relatively poor excuse for seeking a peace that a French Army at the gates of Madrid would have eventually necessitated.

When France offered to discuss terms of peace in a conference at Basel, Spain accepted. Both Godoy and Domingo d'Yriarte, the Spanish negotiator at Basel, were aware of the necessity of ending the war. Yriarte noted: "The French armies, having received reinforcements, would soon have paid a visit to Carlos at Madrid if his favorite minister, with more address than he ever discovered in his subsequent management of political affairs, had not concluded and ratified the Peace of Basel." Godoy, that favorite minister whom the King had awarded the title "Prince of Peace" for his part in the peace negotiations, likewise expressed more simply: "We need peace, whatever the price."[40]

Surprisingly, however, the price the French named in Basel was not particularly high. The Spanish ceded their half of the Isle of Hispaniola to the French, but this had proved almost more trouble than it was worth to the Spanish, so many were not sad to see it go. On the European continent, Spain did not lose any of its borders; in fact, the defensive line along the Pyrenees was restored and confirmed, and the border fortresses returned intact. France unconditionally withdrew her entire military force, which was sent almost immediately to reinforce the Army of Italy. In both Spain and France, all agreed that the Spanish had gotten off very lightly, and perhaps that Godoy now had succeeded in cuckolding the French Republic.[41]

More accurately, however, this represents a deliberate effort on the part of both the French and the Spanish to revive the *Pact Famille*. As several long-serving members of the Spanish government noted, Spain's interests had long been at odds with the British interests, and it was France that offered security for Spanish imperial ventures.[42] Similarly, in Paris it was

[40] Quoted in Hilt, *Troubled Trinity,* 45.

[41] This particular joke had relevance, given the tumultuous but consistent relationship between Prime Minister Godoy and the Spanish queen, Maria Luisa.

[42] Barbara Stein and Stanley Stein, *Edge of Crisis: War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789–1808* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009). As the title indicates, how-

recognized that so long as the British were able to keep the Spanish and the French fleets working against each other, naval dominance would continue to elude them.

With the Peace of Basel, the Spanish became neutral. For some interested parties in Spain, this was the looked-for state of things, much in the same way as Tuscany preferred its space on the edge of the European political system. In Spain the general theory behind a preference for neutrality was that it should be less interested in the Continent and more interested in preserving or expanding its American empire. This was the view during the early 1790s until the execution of the Bourbons forced Spain to react vehemently against the Revolution. Now that the regicides had largely been supplanted, some wanted to return to this state. Godoy and others recognized, however, that this was futile and that allying itself with one of the leading powers on the Continent and globe, France or England, was necessary. The Peace of Basel clearly gave an indication of its new choice. The Earl of Bute's assumption that this treaty of peace would soon become one of war against Great Britain was not unfounded.[43]

For the time being however, it spelled doom for the Coalition campaign in Italy. With the announcement of the Peace of Basel, Napoleon wrote to his brother Joseph: "The peace with Spain makes an offensive war in Piedmont certain."[44] The additional forces that arrived from the Army of the Pyrenees to supplement the Army of Italy in the summer of 1795 were important, but perhaps more significant was the inability of the British to maintain their blockade, or to offer the promised support to the Austro–Sardinians. Admiral Hotham had instructed Horatio Nelson to prevent the Army of Italy from being resupplied by sea, and until the Peace of Basel in July, he had been remarkably successful.

Although, with Spain now completing their turn away from the Coalition, Admiral O'Hara constantly called for reinforcements while watching the Spanish fleet near the Gibraltar station. Hotham reduced Nelson's squadron of 10 ships several times, making it impossible to blockade the Riviera effectively. Several sizable convoys left Genoa and were able to resupply the Army of Italy.[45] Even though the situation

ever, the Mediterranean side of the equation is almost entirely ignored. Archivally there are repeated references to the *Pact Famille* in MAE CP 37, 639–641.

[43] Hilt, *Troubled Trinity*, 44.

[44] Ibid.

[45] BNA ADM 1/394, Nelson to Hotham, n. d.

improved when Admiral Jervis took command of the Mediterranean fleet from Hotham, by that time the damage had been done, and the Austrian advance was defeated by the French counterattack.

Schérer went on the offensive and defeated General Wallis at Loano on November 22, 1795. (de Vins gave up his command to Wallis because of illness a mere day before the French attack.) Napoleon's plans were effective, though they were not fully adopted; Schérer made use of General Massena's brilliance in the field to win the day, but this was made possible by the change in the way the French interacted with foreign powers. In 1795 they were not surrounded by belligerents, but by a fracturing Coalition held together, not by promises of indemnification and security, but with vague promises of neutrality. The Peace of Basel, the neutrality of Tuscany, and the distractions of Corsica spread the British so thin that they were unable to assist the Austro–Sardinian forces.

As a result of this perceived lack of naval support, the Austrians blamed the British for their defeat.[46] The British, however, were not the only members of the Coalition with a naval presence in the Mediterranean. Hotham, well aware of the strain put on the British Navy, had requested a gunboat flotilla from Naples that would have served excellently to augment his frigates and actually succeed with a blockade of the Riviera. These gunboats did not arrive in Corsica until April of 1796, far too late to be of any use. Not only were they late, but they were also poorly situated in Saint-Florent.[47] Ideally, the Austrians would have captured and maintained at least one port along the Riviera to base the blockading fleet out of, as had been the initial goal outlined to Hotham; however, this had not happened. By the time the gunboats arrived, the Italian Campaign had begun in earnest, the French were in almost complete control of the coastline, and the Neapolitans were not long for the Coalition.

Similarly, the Austrians found blame for the Piedmontese. Their tense relationship has already been discussed, but it again caused issues in late 1795–1796. Indeed, the Piedmontese government actually had entered into peace negotiations with the French. They informed Austria of this in January of 1796, saying:

> The outcome of our negotiations depends on the conduct that is adopted in Vienna…. It is only with the greatest repugnance that we shall make a separate peace with France if we are forced to it, that this eventuality certainly

[46] BNA FO 7/45, Morton Eden to Grenville.
[47] BNA FO 20/9, Elliot to Jervis, 25 April 1796.

> will not take place if we find our allies sincerely disposed to provide us with all the help that may assist in sheltering our states from the danger of invasion with which they are threatened.[48]

Even though nothing came of these negotiations immediately, it further exacerbated the rifts in the Coalition that Napoleon would shortly exploit.

The Peace of Basel thus paid immediate dividends for the French because it allowed the military to concentrate their forces and prioritize the Italian theater. There was a growing sense that this theater was the most important of the war. One of the most vocal voices in this opinion was, of course, Bonaparte, who was constantly proposing plans and venting his frustration at Schérer's lack of proactivity.[49] Cacault shared this view as well, and he was still well respected despite not being tapped for the position of Minister in Tuscany. Cacault wrote on January 26:

> It seems to me that it is now for the Army of Italy to secure definitely the glory and the destiny of the Republic, and I cannot cease to be persuaded that its operations and its successes are much more important than those of our generals of the Rhine, where it will be more difficult to obtain decisive advantages than in Italy, and where our success will always afflict the Austrians less.[50]

Herein lies a key difference between the British and the French activity in the Mediterranean. By 1796, the French viewed it, specifically Italy, as a vital and critical front, even if it took Napoleon's brilliance to fully make this a reality. The British, however, never devoted adequate resources to the Mediterranean, instead sending multiple expeditions to the Caribbean. Too much was expected of the diplomats without enough given. In addition, the British failed to offer a coherent and appealing vision for their presence in the Mediterranean. Corsica was a potential avenue for further development, but it went mostly unexplored for reasons elucidated in Chap. 5. The French, meanwhile, offered a counterpoint to British hegemony in the Mediterranean and the world, in many senses acting then as

[48] J.G.A. Fabry, *Histoire de l'Armee d'Italie (1796–1797)* (Paris, 1900–1901), II, 39.

[49] Martin. *The Road to Rivoli*, 100–112.

[50] R. Cleyet Michaud. "*Un diplomate de la Revolution: Francois Cacault et ses Plans de Conquete de Italie* (1793–1796)" *Revue d'Historique Diplomatique*, 86 (1972), 315.

the defenders of the balance of power against an overly aggressive British Empire. This would, over the course of the next five years, morph into something else entirely; however, in looking for an explanation for the victory of the French over the Coalition in the Mediterranean in 1796, the answer lies beyond Bonaparte and in the broader military and diplomatic missions of the period.

CHAPTER 7

The Settling of the Western Mediterranean, 1796–1797

During the early months of 1796, leading up to the Italian Campaign, there was a level of anticipation from all of the Mediterranean powers. The struggle for the Western Mediterranean was reaching a breaking point after the previous several stalemated years. Either the British or the French would resolve their contradictions and, ostensibly, return the region to its settled, liminal status. This is not to say that the region would cease to be contested, but rather that this contest would proceed along normalized lines, with increasingly rigid conceptions of international politics at the core of British and French activity. Given General Schérer's successes at the end of 1795 in Italy, the French were optimistic that they would finally achieve victory in the struggle for the Western Mediterranean. The Piedmontese were struggling financially, and Britain was reluctant to provide pecuniary assistance without realistic hope of success. This reluctance was a result of the increasing lack of confidence the British expressed in the efficacy of the First Coalition in the Mediterranean, but also certainly contributed to that lack of efficacy. As both the British and their allies eyed each other warily, the French emerged in the eyes of many of the smaller powers as the only realistic, if unpalatable, option.

This process was not inevitable. Simply viewing the triumphs of the French in 1796 as the triumph of Revolution over Counter-Revolution fails to take into account the cumulative effect of the decisions made in the previous six years. The French, by radicalizing diplomacy and

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international politics, forced a reaction from both the British and the other Mediterranean powers. This reaction, while framed against the backdrop of Revolution, took a multitude of forms, many of which demanded further reactions within the ostensibly Counter-Revolutionary domain of the First Coalition. Instability and inconsistency were the hallmarks of the Western Mediterranean between 1789 and 1796, and from this morass arose a French program of international policies that began to create an increasingly settled region.

From Spain to Italy and even returning to Corsica, after 1796 the future of the Revolutionary Western Mediterranean once again fell into the margins of European statecraft as the Great Powers stabilized their identities in relation to each other and within the contexts of Revolution and Counter-Revolution. That is not to say that the Western Mediterranean at the end of 1796 resembled the Western Mediterranean of 1788. Rather, *stability* refers to the way states, especially the Great Powers, interacted with each other and viewed the international arena. Instead of operating at the interstices of Revolution and Counter-Revolution, the British and the French both solidified the shape of their opposition to each other, and the smaller powers once again became pawns instead of players.

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The lynchpin of the settling of the Mediterranean was Napoleon's military successes in the Italian Campaign, breaking the stalemate of forces that had allowed the various divergences such as the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom. The first aspect of these successes has been alluded to before and came not in Italy but in Spain with the Treaty of San Ildefonso. General Perignon negotiated this treaty, which turned Spain's neutrality into an alliance with France against Britain, completing the splintering of the First Coalition in the Western Mediterranean. This same French general had just recently been leading his armies across the Spanish border, and this fact caused no small amount of apprehension in the Spanish Court. Their fears were allayed, however, when he presented himself at Court, with the proper credentials, and was promptly squeezed around the leg by the young *infant* Francisco de Paula. His response was to remark on how charming the incident was, and further he did not quibble about the Spanish Court addressing him as "Your Excellency" rather than "Citizen," as required by the government in Paris. These small gestures assured the Spanish that he had arrived "*avec une branche d'olivier a la main et une couronne de*

laurier sur la tète."[1] This olive branch only extended so far as the Spanish, however, and Perignon was quick to push Spain away from "the phantom of neutrality" and towards war with Britain.

Generally, this turn from an alliance with Britain to one with France has been seen through either the perspective of necessity brought on by the French armies, or within the context of the Spanish wish to protect and expand their American Empire. These are both valid and significant factors in the Spanish about-face, but they ignore the critical role of the Mediterranean. In Perignon's instructions, the first issue mentioned was that of the Mediterranean and the sins of the British in that arena.[2] It was vital that for the Ambassador to convince Spain to combine her fleet with the French and push the British out of the Mediterranean, and in return, the Spanish could anticipate finally having Gibraltar returned to the fold. Perignon was also instructed to encourage the Spanish to use their influence with "Portugal, Naples, Sardinia, Parma and the other Italian states to show the immediate interests of these states … to turn against the known enemies of the tranquility of Europe." The instructions continue to emphasize the perfidy of the British, noting that "the deliverance of Corsica will without a doubt follow …" and that "it is impossible that the Spanish will not have knowledge of the insolent declarations made by the English Minister at Genoa and Florence … condemning Spanish boats by the order of the courts of London."[3] The broader question of Spanish America was an enticing vision to extend to Godoy and his compatriots, but the immediate purpose and motivations for an alliance with Spain against Britain lay not across the Atlantic, but in the Mediterranean.

One telling incident in particular highlights the role of the Mediterranean in creating the context for the Treaty of San Ildefonso. In late 1795, a British vessel laden with Italian silks departed from Livorno to London to sell them.[4] Off the coast of Toulon, a French squadron under command of Admiral Richery captured the ship and its merchandise. Richery then took

[1] Douglas Hilt, *The Troubled Trinity: Godoy and the Spanish Monarchs* (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 48.

[2] *Ministre Affaire Etrangers* (hereafter MAE) CP 37 639, "*Instructions pour General Perignon Ambassadeur de la République Française en Espagne*."

[3] Ibid.

[4] There is a great deal of correspondence surrounding this issue, but the best summaries exist in the British National Archives (hereafter BNA) FO 72/41, on 31 May 1796. The first mention of the Minerva in diplomatic correspondence is in BNA FO 72/38 on 11 Sept. 1795.

the ship in to Cadiz, where he sold the silks to the Spanish Philippines Company. These merchants then continued these silks on their way to London on board the *Minerva*. Once ship made its way to London, the original British and Italian owners claimed that the silks had not been seized and sold legally in Cadiz, and therefore ownership should revert to the original purchasers. The Court of Admiralty issued warrants to seize the silks and for the Spanish merchants to appear and answer to the original owners in a civil and maritime suit. The master of the Spanish vessel contested the seizure of the silks, and his appeal was at least partially successful. The initial court turned the matter over to the Prize Court, but here the protest was denied, and the Spanish merchants were called on to show cause why the silks should not now be considered as Prize and as "Droits of Admiralty."

The case was put before the Lords of the Admiralty, sent to Grenville for consideration, and by the middle of 1796 was mentioned in nearly every dispatch and correspondence between Bute and Godoy, as well as Bute and Grenville. The British attempted to use this as an example of the perfidious nature of the French, illegally selling seized goods, but this argument was flimsy at best. To Godoy, this single instance became the embodiment of British offenses against Spain. Moreover, it is worth noting that this was not likely entirely from Godoy—one of the Godoy's chief councilors, Marquis d'Yriarte, had interests in the purchase and resale of the silk. d'Yriarte was quite influential with Godoy, and it is likely that this is one of the reasons the *Minerva* was not quickly forgotten, though this fact did not come out until the final discussion between Godoy and Bute after Spain declared war on Britain.[5]

Regardless, this became the basis of Godoy's critique against Britain in the months leading up to the signing of the Treaty of San Ildefonso. On July 20, Godoy wrote to Bute:

> I am to assure your excellency that if the King my master has any hostile views against England they depend upon the conduct which she has held in maltreating the Spanish commerce and upon the security of the navigations of his subjects, and if his Britannic Majesty does not immediately order all the Spanish merchant men or other vessels whatsoever which are detained to be set at liberty, indemnifying them for the losses sustained … his majesty cannot enter into the amicable adjustment in question in order to do away

[5] FO 72/44, Bute to Grenville, 10 Sept. 1796.

> [with] the several causes of disgust and disagreement which have occurred between the two parties.

Godoy wrote this statement from San Ildefonso, meaning that while he was writing this there were simultaneously negotiations going on with the French to declare war on Britain. When the Portuguese ambassador sought to mediate between Britain and Spain, again the issue of the *Minerva* was brought up as a hindrance to any sort of agreement, despite the fact that Godoy agreed that war would likely be disastrous for Spain.[6]

To a certain extent, the issue of the *Minerva* was likely a pretext, or an excuse, for Godoy to claim mistreatment by Britain and to justify the decision to go to war. Indeed, Bute would explicitly make this claim about the "contradictory and equivocal" Godoy, noting on August 9 that if it was simply a matter of navigation and Spanish ships, there were numerous diplomatic avenues to explore before going to war.[7] But then again on another level, this is precisely the point that the British failed to grasp—for the Spanish, the British expanding their interests and sphere of control to the Western Mediterranean was diametrically opposed to the Spanish goal for entering into war against France. The *Minerva* itself was not a particularly momentous issue, but it demonstrated to the Spanish that the British were more than willing to ignore the agency and claims of Spain in the pursuit of commercial dominance. This is, of course, a slight mischaracterization of British aims, but it is worth noting that in Bute's instructions in 1795, Grenville stressed above all else the issue of impressing on Spain the commercial benefits of cordiality with Britain.[8] The *Minerva* incident undercut any substance to those claims, at least in the eyes of the Spanish.

Issues such as this made Perignon's negotiations with Spain relatively quick, though not entirely uneventful.[9] Much was made of *émigrés* living on Spanish soil, similar to the situations in Tuscany and elsewhere. These "vampires," as one consul referred to them, were a constant source of tension, though Spain was much more willing than Tuscany to classify

[6] BNA FO 72/42, Bute to Grenville, 30 July.

[7] BNA FO 72/43, 9 August.

[8] BNA FO 72/38, "Instructions to Lord Bute."

[9] M. Geoffroy de Grandmaison, *L'Ambassade Française en Espagne Pendant la Révolution,* Paris, 1892; Ch. IV has several detailed stories of some of the difficulties faced by Perignon. After the negotiations he was involved in a smuggling ring and was also compromised by a young woman who was a Royalist spy.

them as undesirable elements to expel.[10] Thus, without much consternation or quibbling, the Spanish and the French agreed to the Treaty of San Ildefonso on July 27, 1796, even though it was not officially signed and promulgated until August 19. This treaty has been highly criticized by those wanting to find fault with Godoy and his ministry.[11] On the one hand, it certainly posed both immediate and long-term benefits to France without similar results for Spain. On the other hand, there was little hope or reason for Spain to remain neutral in 1796.

News of Prussia signing their own peace treaty to focus more on the partition of Poland further solidified the perspective of an ascendant France, as did Napoleon's early victories in Italy in 1796 as negotiations were taking place. The only option other than an alliance with France was a return to friendship with England, and as seen in Chap. 6, there were multiple mitigating factors preventing this from happening. Indeed, the heart of the Treaty of San Ildefonso was the secret Article 18, which stated: "As England is the sole power from whom Spain has suffered direct grievances, in the event of actual war the present alliance will only go into effect against her, and Spain shall remain neutral with any other powers which are at war with the Republic."[12]

In Spain, France took advantage of having not only the ability to bring force to bear on the Spanish frontier but also of the missteps of the British in the Mediterranean. The root of both the Peace of Basel and the Treaty of San Ildefonso was the myriad of issues stemming from the status of the British in the Mediterranean. French diplomatic strategy moved away from the radical rhetoric that alienated the Spanish, and instead Perginon showed the French to be willing and powerful participants in a joint struggle against aggressive British expansion.

As late as August 6, Bute wrote that it was still possible that Spain would not go to war, but there was little conviction to his words. The intelligence coming in from the various consuls showed that the French and the Spanish fleets were moving in coordination and would soon combine.[13] There was a faint hope of stopping the two fleets from joining, as Admiral John Jervis had tasked Admiral Mann with preventing this from

[10] MAE CP 37 640 contains almost entirely discussions concerning émigrés surrounding the treaty negotiations.

[11] See Hilt, *Troubled Trinity*, for a discussion of this historiography.

[12] MAE CP 37 640, "Treaty"; also quoted in Hilt, *Troubled Trinity*, 49.

[13] BNA FO 72/43, Bute to Grenville, 6 Aug.

happening. Jervis had taken over from Hotham, and by all accounts was a competent, if harsh, commander of the Mediterranean fleet. Mann, however, severely damaged the British naval position in the Mediterranean by abandoning his station off Cadiz. He had forgotten supplies in Gibraltar and left his station to return there to retrieve them. On his return he was confronted by a Spanish–French fleet and decided to return to England.[14] There was some small degree of miscommunication involved, and Mann in fact was running low on supplies, but this event caused Jervis, Grenville, and the Lords of the Admiralty no small amount of angst. Bute believed that "had Admiral Mann attacked the French according to the Spanish interpretation of the neutral distance from shore, Langara [the Spanish admiral] would not have fired a gun."[15] Although the *Minerva* incident undercut the British diplomatic position, Mann's intransigence undercut their position of naval superiority in the Mediterranean.

Before official news of the Treaty made its way to Bute, news of the first Spanish step towards war came cascading in to the office of the Ambassador from the various consuls—an embargo on British ships. This again highlights the importance of commerce to the situation, and Godoy's response to Bute when confronted about the embargo was telling:

> …[I]t may be said that a pirate in his atrocious proceedings on the high seas would not have been less just or kind than the English government has been … the embargo is not in consequence of the request of his subjects to whom he is under the necessity of giving satisfaction, but a measure the least prejudicial to the interest of the British subjects, though sufficient to prove that he is ready to claim by force the indemnification of the losses sustained by Spaniards in America, on the ocean, and in the Mediterranean.[16]

Thus Britain was cast as the piratical enemy of the Spanish, intent on depriving them of their place on the world stage.

Ten days later Bute arranged yet another conference with Godoy, anticipating this one to be his last, as the main purpose was to request passports for himself and his consuls to return to Britain in case of war. This meeting

[14] There are several accounts of this scattered across the Admiralty records, but Elliot's flare for the dramatic tells it best in his papers in the Royal Maritime Museum (hereafter RMM) ELL/159, Elliot to Windham, 15 August 1796.

[15] BNA FO 72/43. See ADM 1/395 for a detailed account of this incident from the naval perspective.

[16] BNA FO 72/43, Bute to Grenville, 31 Aug.

is a study in the inconsistencies of Godoy because he variously stated that war was inevitable and it was only because he [Godoy] held Bute in such affection that hostilities had not started sooner, and that "since we are to draw the sword, it is a pleasing reflection that it cannot last long." He at first refused Bute passports on the grounds that he wanted him to stay in Madrid to conduct business as usual (entirely contrary to standard diplomatic practice). He communicated all of this while still withholding the fact that they were officially at war according to the treaty of August 19, which still had not been announced officially to Bute.

When Bute finally did wring a tacit admission to hostilities not only being inevitable but in fact already begun, he turned to leave, only for Godoy to stop him yet again. Godoy pressed Bute to make some proposal for indemnification that would forestall Spanish involvement in the war. The dickering eventually devolved into a discussion concerning the merits of California as possible indemnification for the British—after their ceding of all other conquests made in the war, particularly in the Caribbean. Bute was obviously unable to make any sort of definite proposal but requested that Godoy provide him with some written documentation concerning indemnification. Godoy agreed, but as far as the Foreign Office records show, no such documentation was provided.[17] By the end of the month, Bute had quit Spain and by the end of the year the British would have quit the Mediterranean almost entirely.

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Against the backdrop of negotiations with Spain and the continued fracturing of the First Coalition, Napoleon Buonoparte—as he was known until the start of the Italian Campaign—returned to the Mediterranean at the head of the Army of Italy. His successes in this position contributed to the zeal of the Spanish in forming a positive alliance with the French, and also were fueled by the same internal tensions that led to the First Coalition fracturing in such a way. By the end of his Italian Campaign, Napoleon had completed the destruction of the First Coalition and set himself on the path to glory.

Stepping aside from the hagiography, however, the Italian Campaign is the culmination of the struggle for the Western Mediterranean between France and Britain. Even though most of the actual military encounters

[17] BNA FO 72/44, 10 Sept., Bute to Grenville. Bute was not pleased with the offer of California, which he argued was "a drug market for China and the whale fishery which turns out little or nothing of consequence."

were with the forces of the Piedmont–Sardinians and Austrians, the Campaign broke the stalemate of the previous three years and were the product of the international system of instability that reigned during those years. The tension between Britain and Spain, resulting in the Peace of Basel, allowed the Army of Italy to be reinforced with the troops from the Pyrenees. The slow alienation of the Piedmontese, Austrians, Genoese, Tuscans, and Neapolitans spread the British so thin in combating French advances, both militarily and diplomatically, that without hardly any effort, the groundwork was laid for a successful Campaign. Corsica was the lynch-pin in causing much of this dissension, and tangentially provided some of the key players in the Italian Campaign, most notably of course Napoleon. Thus, while the Italian Campaign serves as the end of the struggle for the Western Mediterranean and the beginning of a new, relatively stable period of international politics, the success of it was predicated on the struggle that had been ongoing for several years.

Napoleon himself played a key part in this resolution, embodying the practical application of some of the more radical elements of Revolutionary foreign policy. Even before Napoleon arrived to take command of his army, tensions emerged in Italy over using the Army as a foreign policy tool. The Army of Italy was ill-equipped, ill-managed, and in large part manned by the sick, with a staggering figure of 38,119 men in hospital, compared to just under 38,000 men active.[18] Saliceti had been part of Bonaparte's advance guard, coming in to help prepare the Army for the Campaign. To this end, he sought to obtain a loan from the Genoese government to assist in buying food and equipment.

The Genoese, however, were not immediately willing to acquiesce, and eventually responded by agreeing to supply a large amount of grain but not the requested cash. Saliceti answered by proposing a plan to the Directory whereby, if the Genoese did not respond in the affirmative with specie, he would march a French force to Sampierdarena—directly under the walls of Genoa itself.[19] Aside from running the risk of finally pushing the Genoese into a defensive agreement with the Coalition, this also extended the French line by another 28 miles and left it vulnerable to an opposing force intersecting the line by moving through the mountain passes.

[18] This figure is quoted in Brown, *The Road to Rivoli,* 126.
[19] MAE CP Genes, P14325, Saliceti to the Committee of Public Safety, 8 March 1796.

Despite its risks, there was support for this plan, especially from the new French envoy to Genoa, Faipoult. The former Minister of Finance, Faipoult was keenly aware of the difficulties facing the Army without support from Genoa; he wrote: "His [Saliceti] plan is bold, but the position of the army is so unfortunate that it has to be adopted." He noted that the Army's problems were mostly pecuniary in nature: "The clothing supply does not suffer, at the moment there is wheat for four or five months, but there is no meat, no animal fodder, and no transport."[20] Faipoult and Saliceti were willing to use the Army as a bludgeon to obtain the needed supplies, even at the expense of the Genoese neutrality that had been so beneficial to France. When Napoleon did arrive in Nice on August 26, he immediately recognized the importance not simply of military supply, but of maintaining the balance of power in France's favor. With the British struggling in Corsica and spread thin dealing with Spain, France was free to operate with impunity. There was a danger, however, of pushing Genoa into the arms of the Coalition, or of allowing a pretext for Austro–Sardinian intervention.

Neither of these scenarios was likely, but given the critical location of Genoa prior to the Italian Campaign, Napoleon saw no reason to risk such an aggressive move. Contrary to Saliceti's proposal, Bonaparte wrote to Faipoult in Genoa saying: "The affairs that are being dealt with on your side disquiet me. I fear that we go too far, and that we may upset the essential military operations that we have to carry out… I pray you to inform me precisely of the way this affair is developing." After calling the Genoese "brave and proud," he added: "My opinion is that we should take [what the Genoese offer] without a murmur and continue to live in peace and friendship with this republic, the enmity of which would be fatal to our commerce, our supplies, and would upset all our military calculations."[21] Napoleon did not try to force the Genoese into a strict, radical position, instead allowing them space while he worked to remove the more significant counterweights to French influence in the region.

Once the Army of Italy had been supplied as much as possible, Napoleon almost immediately set it to work. The specifics of the Italian Campaign, one of the most studied and dissected series of military maneuvers in history, will not be reexamined in-depth here. In brief, Bonaparte began on

[20] Ibid., Faipoult to the Committee of Public Safety, 12 March 1796.

[21] Napoleon, *Correspondance de Napoleon ier Publiee par Rodre de l'Empereur Napoleon III* (Paris, 1858–1869), no. 92.

April 10, 1796, with a push from Savona towards Ceva, and at the Battle of Montenotte on April 12 he defeated the Austrians under Argenteau. From there he defeated the Piedmontese on the 13th and Austrians on the 14th at Dego. One week later Victor Amadeus III requested peace talks. France and Piedmont signed an armistice on April 28; it was then ratified in the Treaty of Paris on May 15, 1796. The Austrians, stunned by the quickness of events, had already withdrawn to the north bank of the Po and then out of Piedmont, across the Adda. In a matter of 12 days of fighting and 5 days of negotiations, Napoleon had knocked the Piedmontese out of the war they had been fighting since 1792.

This quick success raised the immediate question of what to do with Piedmont–Sardinia. In contrast to 1793, Napoleon and the Directory were not seeking conquest. Although the Treaty of Paris was certainly disadvantageous and gave the French Army free passage through Piedmontese territory towards the rest of Italy, it also, at least temporarily, served to guarantee the existence of the House of Savoy and its remaining territories.[22] There was even talk of compensation for the losses of Nice and Savoy, though Napoleon was unwilling to allow them Lombardy.[23] As France supplanted both Britain and Austria as the major power in the region, it collected the alliances with the minor powers in a way that began to look like the Old Regime, or even like the British in 1793. This form of international relations was relatively short-lived, quickly morphing into the system of Sister Republics; however, this represents one facet of the transition of France from radical foreign policy to a nuanced combination of Revolutionary and traditional international politics. From the failed invasion of Sardinia in 1793 to the Treaty of Paris with Piedmont in 1796, both the methods and goals of French foreign policy in the Western Mediterranean changed drastically.

Bonaparte next decided that the time was ripe to strike at the rest of the Italian states. Before attacking the enemies of the Revolution in Rome and Naples, however, Napoleon turned to neutral Tuscany, specifically Livorno. There had been much discussion in Paris about what to do with Tuscany, with Cacault arguing that it should be treated as separate from the Habsburg Dominions and actually be offered territory stretching all

[22] See Raymond Guyot, *Le Directoire et la Paix de l'Europe* (Geneva, 1977), 256–260, 319–320 for the course of negotiations during these months.

[23] Broers, *Napoleonic Imperialism,* 182.

the way to the Adriatic.[24] This suggestion was not well received. In addition to the failure of Tuscan neutrality to amount to any material gain for France, over the course the 1790s Livorno had supplanted Marseilles as the chief commercial port in the Western Mediterranean. Also, the English remained the primary beneficiaries of Livorno remaining a free port.[25] In 1796, the Directory ordered Napoleon to occupy Livorno, closing it to the British and "to render himself master of the English, Neapolitan, and Portuguese vessels and other enemy war materiel," but otherwise to respect Tuscan neutrality.[26]

Prior to that, the British, led by Elliot in Corsica and Drake in Genoa, attempted in vain to rally the Italian states again to a defensive league. Elliot hoped that the imminent threat would spur them towards working together, but this was sadly optimistic. In Tuscany, Miot ratcheted up complaints against Tuscan partiality in preparation for an attack against neutrality, with issues concerning émigrés remaining the chief charge, as well as violations of neutrality by various English and Neapolitan ships. Realizing that this ultimately would result in the French renewing the question of a passage of French troops to assault the Papal States and Naples, Wyndham in Florence decided to act preemptively.

In February, he requested passage for a small number of Neapolitan troops, which the Grand Duke promptly refused. The Neapolitans asked once more, the next month, this time to move 10,000 troops. Again, Tuscany refused, but noted as in 1793, they could do nothing to stop passage should it be forced. At this news, Miot offered to provide French troops to secure Tuscany against the incursion, but this too was refused. Complaining that Tuscany preferred Neapolitan invasion to French assistance, Miot laid the diplomatic foundation for future French intervention into the Grand Duchy. Interestingly, in reaction to this the Grand Duke opened communication with Spain to exchange commercial concessions for guarantees of assistance against either British or French incursions. Nothing became of these talks, mostly because of Spain already being

[24] AN AFIII 87, Cacault to the Committee of Public Safety, 16 Pluviouse III (February 3, 1795).

[25] MAE, *Memoires et Documents*, XIII, *Italie: Dépêches et Mémoires, 1794–1809, Vues sur l'Italie, and Observations sur les Intérêts Politiques de la France*, 114–115.

[26] *Archives du Ministère de la Guerre* (hereafter AMG), B3*119 Directory to Bonaparte, 7 May 1796, 41–42. This letter is also in *Recueil des Actes du Directoire Exécutif (Procès-Verbaux, Arrêtes, Instructions, Lettres, et Actes Divers)*, ed A. Debidour (Paris, 1811–1917), II, 328–333.

deeply entrenched in its own discussions with France, leading up to the Treaty of San Il Defonoso later in the year.[27]

Caught between these two major powers with an increasingly small window of neutrality, Tuscany attempted to play the two sides off of each other, offering to France the counterargument that French occupation was likely to result in English bombardment and the destruction of the port—the inverse of the argument they had used to persuade the English not to act. Failing this argument, they hoped that Rome and Naples would quickly make peace, eliminating the need for the violation of Tuscan neutrality.[28] Neither of these arguments were effective in the end, though Rome and Naples did preemptively sue for peace in June of 1796. The Bourbons in Naples sent an emissary to Florence, and Manfredini agreed to introduce him to Miot, who then personally oversaw the introduction of the Neapolitan to Bonaparte. The negotiations for the armistice went relatively quick because it was clear to the Neapolitans that the Coalition was crumbling. The armistice's terms included the withdrawal of Neapolitan forces from the Coalition armies and closing all Neapolitan ports to the British; it was agreed to on June 5.[29]

With Naples out of the way, the focus turned to the Papal States. Because of the rough relations already mentioned between the Papacy and Tuscany, the Pope turned to the Spanish minister in Rome, Jose de Azara, to mediate. This choice was no doubt made in part as a result of the newfound closeness between Spain and France, in addition to the fact that Azara had been involved as an intermediary between France and Rome during the Basseville incident several years earlier. This murder remained the pretext for Napoleon marching against Rome, though the sizable amount of plunder available was also a motivating factor.

Indeed, even though Azara offered 10 million Roman *livres* in cash and provisions, no agreement was reached in the initial meeting. It took until June 23, after an invasion as far as Bologna, deep into Papal territory, for Azara and Bonaparte to reach an agreement. The terms were exorbitant, but the Papal States had little choice. The French demanded 29 million in cash, horses, and provisions, 100 works of art and 500 manuscripts, all to

[27] Richard Long, "The Relations of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany with Revolutionary France, 1790–1799" (Florida State University Dissertation, 1972, 189.

[28] Long, 181.

[29] Joseph du Teil, *Rome, Naples et le Directoire: Armistices et traites, 1796–1797* (Paris 1902), 98, 107ff, 122–137; Miot, *Mémoires,* 48–54.

be selected by the French. This treaty temporarily saved Rome (though it was not ratified in Paris and would later be replaced by Tolentino), but it was too late for Livorno.[30] On June 20, Bonaparte had ordered General Vaubois to enter Tuscany and proceed to the port.

Several days before this order, the Grand Duke had sent a delegation from Florence to Bologna to determine the intentions of the French. Miot initially preceded them, ostensibly to beg Napoleon not to violate neutrality, but in reality to facilitate the armistice with Rome. The commissioners of war, Pierre-Anselme Garrau and Saliceti, also were present for the same purpose. Thus, when Manfredini arrived in Bologna, he was greeted by a sizable welcoming party. Overall, the reception was pleasant, especially because Manfredini also had brought Prince Tommaso Corsini and Lorenzo Pignotti, a professor from the University of Pisa who had taught Joseph Bonaparte. Napoleon reminisced that his brother had high praise for Pignotti. Despite the warm welcome, the purpose of the delegation remained the ascertaining of Bonaparte's intentions.[31]

These became all too clear early in the meeting. While Manfredini talked with Bonaparte concerning the importance of Tuscan neutrality, attempting to sway him with the argument concerning bombardment by the English, Corsini and Pignotti noticed on Bonaparte's table a map with the roads to Livorno traced in red. They informed Manfredini, who then explicitly and passionately tried to convince the General against an occupation of Livorno, but he was unable to change his mind. Manfredini was assured that general neutrality would be respected and only Livorno occupied, but this must have been sore consolation to the Tuscans with their neutrality treaty with France barely one-year-old. To make matters worse, when trying to depart, Manfredini and the delegation were stopped because of a fictitious issue with their passports. Bonaparte then invited them to accompany him to Livorno to oversee the occupation. Though Manfredini sought to warn the Grand Duke and was worried about being accused of collusion with the French, he was given little choice.[32]

On June 23, Napoleon sent a letter to the Grand Duke that noted the constant insults to the French flag and property, and that the Directory felt the duty "to return force with force, to make its commerce respected,

[30] Joseph du Teil, *Rome, Naples et le Directoire: Armistices et Traites, 1796–1797* (Paris 1902), 98, 107ff, 122–137.

[31] Zobi, *Storia Civile della Toscana,* III, 179ff.

[32] Ibid.

and it has ordered me to send a division of the army to take possession of Livorno." The letter reiterated that the French would respect neutrality, and hoped that the Grand Duke would "… applaud these just, useful and necessary measures."[33] By the 25th, the French had arrived at Pistoia, about halfway between Bologna and Livorno, and quite close to Florence itself. Napoleon received a reply letter there from the Grand Duke expressing displeasure at the orders of the Directory and the actions of Napoleon, but noting: "If Your Excellency does not have the faculty to suspend the ingress of your troops into Livorno, pending new orders from the Directory, the Governor of that city and piazza has full powers to agree to the conditions."[34]

On June 25, Wyndham alerted Udney, the consul at Livorno, to "prepare for the worst," and almost immediately the British Factory began loading supplies and material onto every available ship.[35] After working for almost two days straight, the convoy was ready to depart with almost every bit of naval stores and provisions, as well as nearly all of the English personnel. Udney had even thought to secure 240 oxen, hay, and water for the fleet because fresh provisions from Livorno would be unavailable for some time.[36] They departed not a moment too soon, as on June 27 when the French entered Livorno, the convoy was barely 12 leagues from port. Narrowly avoiding a bombardment from the port's guns, the convoy was still subject to numerous French privateers preying on the large number of merchant ships that had little to no protection. These privateers fled when none other than Horatio Nelson with the "Captain" and the *Meleager* arrived. The convoy set out for Corsica and met with no further trouble.

The French were understandably furious at their failure to catch the British off guard, and Bonaparte put much of the blame on Spannocchi, the recently promoted governor of Livorno who was known to have British leanings. Spannocchi, meanwhile, was furious over the fact that the French had used Tuscan guns to fire on a British vessel, the *Inconstant*, which had been speeding away from Livorno. This led to a tense confrontation between Bonaparte and Spannocchi after Bonaparte's arrival in the

[33] *Correspondance de Napoleon,* no. 678, I, 530–531.

[34] Zobi, *Storia Civile della Toscana*, III, *Appendice di doumenti*, No. 19, Fossombroni to Bonaparte.

[35] BNA FO 72/12, Wyndham to Grenville, 25 June 1796.

[36] Ibid., Udney to Grenville, 17 June 1796.

city; the incident included Bonaparte striking Spannochi on the head. The result was Spannocchi's arrest, and Bonaparte filing charges against him with the Grand Duke.[37]

Despite the success of taking Livorno, the escape of the British made the expedition a relative failure. This was further compounded by a delay in seizing Porto Ferraio, allowing the British to capture it instead and, for the moment at least, securing access to Corsica and a blockade of Livorno. Similarly, the seizure of any and all goods remotely pertaining to the British in Livorno proved remarkably difficult and occasioned disputes between both the consuls of other nations and the merchants themselves. In a perhaps fitting twist of fate, a rush of Corsican refugees flooded to the port in hopes of returning to the island once the expected French invasion began, further complicating the situation in Livorno. Reminiscent of the Toulonese refugee situation of two-and-a-half years before, the French commissioners found themselves constantly harangued and were offered little cooperation by the Tuscan officials in Livorno.[38]

One particular incident is worth noting, if only for its absurdity. In September, there was a purported miracle at a church, and a large crowd gathered in response. Several Corsicans in the crowd began jeering loudly and the crowd grew hostile. The Corsicans' response was to draw their swords and attempt to hack their way through the crowd. A French sniper, attempting to stop them, accidently hit a Frenchman. The French military commander, Serurier at this point, then ordered the arrest of 20 trouble-making priests. The Corsicans took it on themselves to patrol the streets for Tuscan soldiers to harass, which then prompted Serurier to order all Tuscans to their barracks because he could not control the Corsicans.[39]

These factors eventually led to Bonaparte evacuating Livorno; it had not proven either strategically or financially valuable, and he needed his resources to maintain his siege on the Austrian fortress of Mantua. Simultaneously, however, the British had received orders to evacuate Corsica and the Mediterranean in general; thus, this left Tuscany on the fringe of the European political system again, as well as devastated by the occupation and systematic destruction of the commercial value of

[37] MAE, CP 148, Miot to Delacroix, 14 Messidor IV, 2 July 1796; and Corsini to the Directory, 28 Messidor IV, 16 July 1796. For Napoleon's charges, see *Correspondance de Napoleon,* no. 703, Bonaparte to Ferdinand III, 11 Messidor IV, 29 June 1796, I, 551.

[38] AN AF/III 88, Corsini to Delacroix, 10 Oct. 1796.

[39] Ibid., Belleville to Delacrois, 23 Sept. 1796.

Livorno. Initially, in September, Elliot intended to "make an immediate attempt" on Livorno. Yet, Wyndham argued that it would be better to wait until the Austrians were victorious in the north because forcing the French to evacuate Livorno would simply push them to Florence.[40] This victory never came, however, as Napoleon fought back each attempt to relieve Mantua.

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The last remaining British stronghold in the Mediterranean was their tenuous hold on Corsica. The island itself had become increasingly antagonistic towards the British after the exile of Paoli. The Corsican people once again felt the pressure of external overlords, even if in this case it was not exploitative Genoese administrators or absentee French nobility but Corsican-appointed British tax collectors. Regardless, maintaining control over the island with full control of the Mediterranean would have been difficult. Keeping control while beset by enemies on nearly all sides was impossible. It is worth noting that, from the perspective of London, the Mediterranean was lost as soon as the Spanish promulgated the Treaty at San Ildefonso and the British were evicted from Livorno. The former occurred on August 18, and on August 31 orders went out to Elliot and Jervis to begin the evacuation of Corsica and, by the end of the year, the Mediterranean in general.

The British anticipated a French and/or Spanish invasion of the island, which was their last stronghold in the region, and they were not wrong. Even though Napoleon could not spare many troops, he did arrange for Gentili, one of his fellow Corsicans, to gather the refugees displaced by Paoli who were eager to retake their home.[41] Although the thought of evacuation was anathema to Elliot, who remained convinced that it would only take the British making a show of strength in the Mediterranean to rally the Italian powers, it was also likely the correct move. On October 9, Genoa officially committed itself to the side of the French (without the presence of an army at their walls), with the issue of the *Modeste* brought up as a key justification.[42] On October 10, the French armistice with Naples formally turned into a peace treaty.[43] Similarly, though it was certainly disheartening to the Austrians to be abandoned by the British Navy,

[40] BNA FO 20/11, Wyndham to Elliot, 14 Sept. 1796.
[41] AN AF/III/432.
[42] AN AD/XVIIIc/448, 9 Oct. 1796.
[43] Davis, *Naples and Napoleon*.

there was little it could have done to alter the situation at Mantua without the cooperation of the Italian powers; therefore the British position was pointlessly overextended. Napoleon had carefully positioned the French to complete the dismantling of the Coalition in the Western Mediterranean.

The evacuation of Corsica was helped along by an advance force of 200 Republicans appearing outside of Bastia on October 18. These were separate from Gentili's much larger force but were gathered and supported by Napoleon. They left Livorno on the 15th, managing to avoid British cruisers en route to landing on the island and marching on Bastia. They nearly caught the British as they left the citadel of Bastia, but Nelson, who had been in charge of the evacuation, had the foresight to spike the guns that faced seaward. If not for this, it seems likely that the French would have shot the entire British evacuation convoy to pieces.[44] The British convoy also had to avoid a Spanish fleet that arrived at the same time; however, the Spanish were not interested in engaging the British, despite their superior numbers. Rather, they seemed intent on arriving at Livorno to take on Gentili's Corsicans, though they also were unable to do this because of a change in the winds.[45] Even though the British were able to evacuate cleanly, it was an evacuation nonetheless. They made their way to Porto Ferraio and then Elba, but the British had lost their ability to substantively influence the Mediterranean either by force or diplomacy, at least for a time.

The British did not complete the full evacuation of the Mediterranean until the end of 1796, and they returned in 1797 after the Battle of St. Vincent in which Jervis destroyed the Spanish fleet. Nevertheless, by that time the damage had been done. Bonaparte had knocked Austria out of the war, as well as Naples. The French expanded their national borders and surrounded themselves with malleable Sister Republics. The Directory gutted the Papal States to form the Cisalpine Republic and formed Genoa into the Ligurian Republic. Only Tuscany arguably achieved its goal with its return to neutrality, but at a high cost and only temporarily.

In the end, however, the struggle for the Western Mediterranean should not be seen in terms of territorial loss or gain. Corsica was returned to the French and Austria lost Lombardy, but Corsica had not been likely to remain British in those times of turbulence, and the French compensated Austria with Venice. Rather, the struggle for the Western Mediterranean

[44] BNA ADM 1/395, no 175, Jervis to Nepean, 23 Oct. 1796.
[45] Ibid.

was over a broader vision for international politics and interaction. Would France be permitted to radicalize the diplomatic profession and run roughshod over international law and conventions? Would Britain be permitted to extend its influence throughout the Mediterranean as well as across the Atlantic? These questions were answered over the course of these three years, not by any one battle or even one campaign, and not in Paris or London. More accurately, they were answered through a conversation that took place within the Western Mediterranean between representatives from both major and minor powers over issues such as autonomy; self-determination; neutrality; and, ultimately, the balance of power in the Mediterranean.

Through this conversation, France transitioned from a radical, isolated actor on the international stage to a participant in a broader reformation of accepted forms of European statecraft. This reformation resulted in drastic changes and altered the shape of diplomatic and political interactions, but also it shared deep similarities with the Old Regime system. One of the most important areas of further interest in this process is the creation of the Sister Republics.[46] They serve as a key aspect of the transition between Revolution and Empire. Although these were Revolutionary creations, there remained a tension between the radical wholesale creation of new states and the more traditional motivations of creating a buffer zone between France and Austria. The Sister Republics represented a new form of international politics and state-formation, but with a more defined and clear objective than the sometimes flippant disregard for other states found in 1793.[47]

Likewise, in October of 1796, the Directory in Paris tasked Miot, the former ambassador to Tuscany, with the reorganization and reintegration of Corsica into France. In the early 1790s this task had essentially been entrusted to Paoli and Saliceti by means of the Commission, and the result was ambiguity concerning the relationship between France and the island. By contrast, in 1796 the Revolutionary state had solidified its status on the international level to the extent that statesmen were able to act more decisively in their attempts to recreate and reinforce the values and objectives

[46] Stephen Walt, *Revolution and War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Owen Connelly, *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms* (London: Macmillan, 1970); R.M.H. Kubben, "Sister Republics: Power and Law in Revolutionary Europe," Tilburg Working Paper Series on Jurisprudence and Legal History, 4 Nov. 2009.

[47] Jeremy Black, *European International Relations* (Paris, 2002).

of Revolutionary France.[48] Over the next six months, Miot wielded near-dictatorial power in Corsica, splitting the island into two separate departments: Golo in the north and Liamone in the south. He appointed all judicial and municipal officials and arranged elections for the Corsican representatives to the Council of Five Hundred and Council of Ancients. By March 28, he considered his work complete and left to become the Ambassador of France in Turin, while Corsica became a part of France.[49]

As should have been expected, however, simply making a declaration to Paris concerning the unity of the island neglected the agency of the Corsicans. There remained severe religious tensions on the island, and collecting taxes from villages for the first time in seven years proved difficult.[50] Over the next three years, Corsica was in an almost constant state of turmoil and insurrection, with the two largest revolts occurring later in 1797 and then again in 1800. With appropriate symmetry to the situation in 1793, the intervention of Lucien Bonaparte escalated the 1797 revolt. He sought to repress the Counter-Revolutionaries remaining on the island with as much force as possible, but the reaction pushed the French once again from the center of the island and relegated them to the coastal forts. The more successful tactic taken by Vauban, the commander of the 43rd Regiment tasked with keeping the peace, was to simply wait out the insurgents, trusting in the inability of the Corsicans to remain united across family and clan divisions. Without Paoli, unification was impossible and the revolt petered out. The same process occurred in 1800, and though Corsica did not become a peaceful part of France (and to a certain extent still is not), challenges to French authority became more and more infrequent.

The rise of Napoleon certainly assisted this process, as the union with France became less onerous with a Corsican as a leading figure. Nevertheless, the relatively settled status of Corsica also was representative of the overall path to stability provided by the reentrance of the French into the international system. The statecraft of 1793 largely failed

[48] Marc Belissa, "Can a Powerful Republic Be Peaceful? The Debate in the Year IV on the Place of France in the European Order," in *Republics at War, 1776–1840: Revolutions, Conflicts, and Geopolitics in Europe and the Atlantic World*, ed. P. Serna, De Francesco, and Judith Miller (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Belissa, *Repenser l'ordre Européen, 1795–1802* (Paris, 2006).

[49] Antoine Casanova, *Peuple Corse, Révolutions Et Nation Française* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1979).

[50] Ibid.

because of the inability of France to converse and negotiate with the other European powers. The attempt to create the French Revolutionary state without acting in concert with the other major actors involved in the European system resulted in a confused and unstable international system, with Corsica as a key example. By 1795 and 1796, French statesmen had reopened dialogue, and with that dialogue came a clearer vision for the role of the new French state on an international level.[51] Corsica no longer served as a proving ground for Enlightened reforms, or a testing ground for the exportation of the radical Revolution. The "nuisance" became less a borderland and instead was annexed fully into the French conception of the state. This same model remained the basis of the Napoleonic state, and indeed continued to inform French statecraft into the age of Imperialism.

The British, meanwhile, also learned from their experiences in the borderlands of Western Mediterranean international politics. When they returned to maintaining a naval presence in the region, the British did not attempt to reclaim any sort of political standing. Their status in the Mediterranean had been ambiguous between 1793 and 1796 because of the inability of the British to solidify a Counter-Revolutionary response to Revolutionary France. In their own attempt to annex Corsica into a new version of the British state, they alienated their allies and failed to provide a coherent reason to side with them over the French. By the turn of the century their identity was much more clearly formulated. The turn towards Empire did not simply occur in France but also in Britain.

Perhaps the most telling example of changes and stabilization in both the British and the French international activities occurred on another Mediterranean island. In 1798, Napoleon left Toulon with a fleet destined for Egypt. After stopping at various ports along the coast of Italy, including Ajaccio, the fleet made its way to Malta. For the previous several years there had been discussion among the French and their new allies concerning Malta because the Knights of St. John were weak and ripe for intervention. One suggestion had been to establish Godoy, the Prime Minister of Spain, as the head of the Knights, where he would act as equal part puppet to France and Spain. This idea was scuttled once Godoy learned of the vows of celibacy.[52] Nevertheless, Malta remained an issue, at least until Napoleon arrived off the coast of the small island. Within six days

[51] Belissa, "Can a Powerful Republic Be Peaceful?"

[52] Douglas Hilt, *The Troubled Trinity: Godoy and the Spanish Monarchs* (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1987).

he defeated the small military force of the Knights of St. John; completely restructured the political, social, and economic policies of the island; and established a constitution.

This Maltese constitution would be even more short-lived than the Corsican example.[53] The Maltese were not happy under French rule and sent messengers to the British fleet in Sicily for help. By October of 1798, Alexander Ball arrived in Malta to conduct the siege of Valetta. He would later be named its Civil Commissioner, and after the French capitulated in 1800, he essentially ruled the island. Nominally, Malta was part of the Kingdom of Sicily, but from 1800 to 1813 it was a British Protectorate. After 1813 it became a Crown Colony and continued its association with Britain until 1974. In 1800, however, there was no constitution. The Maltese citizens did issue a declaration that proclaimed George III to be their sovereign, but this was by no means a legally binding act. In essence, the British carefully separated Malta from France, establishing a precedent that stretched into the nineteenth century.

Malta then stands as a counterpoint to the Corsican fiascos of the previous five years. Napoleon based his actions on the drive to reform the Maltese state into an image of the French state, leaving little room for autonomy or self-governance. For his part, Alexander Ball never considered the possibility of an Anglo-Maltese Kingdom. The island did become a small source of tension between the British and their allies over the course of the first decade of the nineteenth century, but at no point did the situation escalate to the often absurd levels found with the reception of the First Coalition to the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom. The Western Mediterranean as a region stabilized as the conceptual space provided by the French Revolution shrunk, the borderlands diminished, and the boundaries solidified. The ambiguities of Revolution and Counter-Revolution that created the context for the exploration of new forms of the state was subsumed first by Napoleonic Imperialism, and then by global Imperialism, as Europe transitioned from Revolution to Empire.

[53] For more on Malta, see Desmond Gregory, *Malta, Britain, and the European Powers, 1793–1815* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996).

Erratum to: France, Britain, and the Struggle for the Revolutionary Western Mediterranean

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34903 – 5 (Nelson)
34932 (Nelson)
34937 (Nelson)
37849 (Wyndham)
37852 (Wyndham)
46827 (Drake)

British National Archives, Kew

Admiralty Records
ADM 1
ADM 2
ADM 7

Colonial Office

CO65
CO 91
CO173

Foreign Office

FO 3 (Algiers
FO 7 (Austria)
FO 20 (Corsica)
FO 43 (Rome)
FO 49 (Malta)
FO 67 (Sardinia)
FO 70 (Sicily)
FO 72 (Spain)
FO 77 (Tunis)
FO 79 (Tuscany)
FO 95 (Various letters)
FO 165 (Naples)
FO 528 (Hervey Papers)

Home Office

HO 50

War Office

WO 1
WO6
WO24

Ministre Affaires Etrangers – Archives Diplomatiques, La Courneuve

CC Algiers 32
CC Genès 91
CC Naples 45
CC Nice 17
CC Livourno 60, 61
Miot PP
P5243 (Corsica
P8843 (Naples)
P14324-5 CP (Genes)
CP 37 Spain

National Maritime Museum

Hood papers (Papers of Samuel Hood, Admiral, 1st Viscount Hood)
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[1] Note: Page numbers with "n" denote foot notes.

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